THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

MONSIGNOR LOUIS DUCHESNE

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EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

FROM ITS FOUNDATION TO THE END OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

BY MONSIGNOR LOUIS DUCHESNE
DE L'ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE
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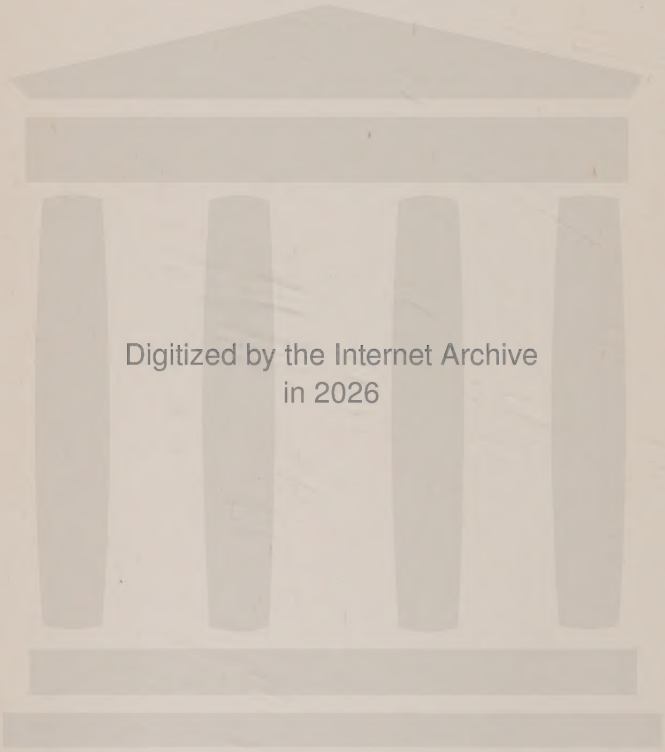

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PREFACE

AT the time of Diocletian's persecution, when the churches were destroyed, the sacred books burned, and the Christians proscribed, or forced to apostasize, one of their number was quietly working away at the first history of Christianity. His was not a mind of the highest order, but he was patient, hard-working, and conscientious, and during many long years, he had collected materials for his contemplated book. He succeeded in saving these materials from the general shipwreck, and even in turning them to account. Thus Eusebius of Cæsarea became the father of ecclesiastical history. And the first duty of those who take up the same task again—so long after, but in days not much less dark—is to recall his name and his incomparable services. But for his unrivalled diligence in searching through those Palestinian libraries, where the learned Origen and Bishop Alexander had collected the whole Christian literature of early days, our knowledge of the first three centuries of the Church's life would be small indeed. We cannot of course but lament the destruction of these libraries, yet, thanks to him, and to the remarkable fragments he preserved, we can appreciate in some measure what they were.

Eusebius, however, is not the only witness to the treasures of this ancient literature. Several of the early books he mentions have come down to us, and others have been read, and passed on, by painstaking students like St Epiphanius, St Jerome, and Photius. It is possible, therefore, to write the literary history of Christianity from

the earliest times, and the task has often been attempted. In recent years a very remarkable treatise on this subject by O. Bardenhewer[1] has been produced in Germany. During the last thirty years Adolph Harnack and his school have been actively employed, like Eusebius before the persecution, in collecting documents for a great synthesis. And the scientific world has been kept informed of their progress by the publication of the *Texte und Untersuchungen*,[2] and especially by two preliminary works on the transmission of early Christian literature and on its chronology.[3]

These works—and it would be easy to add others to the list, of French,[4] English, or Italian origin—have thrown much light on these ancient writings and their relationship to each other. The knowledge of documents has indeed made great progress. Towards the end of the 17th century, the honest and judicious Tillemont based his treatises on the most conscientious study of all the sources of information then available. He would be much astonished, could he appear in our midst now, to see all that has been discovered since.

Nevertheless, we must not think that the progress of research has essentially, or even greatly, modified the tradition set forth in his learned volumes. The partial results attained by so many discoveries and so many efforts, tend on the whole to justify the views taken by the wise critics of the time of Louis XIV. There has been a reaction; we have recoiled from the wild theories emanating from Tübingen, though others have taken their place, the human

[1] *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, Herder, 1902-1903, 2 vols.

[2] *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Leipzig, Hinrich.

[3] *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Pt. I.; *Die Ueberlieferung und der Bestand* (1893), Pt. XI.; *Die Chronologie* (1897-1904). I must mention also the collection of Christian writings of the three first centuries, published by the Academy of Berlin: several volumes have already appeared.

[4] Especially that of P. Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne* (1901).

brain being always fertile in strange inventions. But there is a middle position, represented by the judgment of serious, right-minded men, which commends itself to the common-sense public. I need not say that I believe that position to be mine; I may deceive myself. But the folly of some of the theories is as repugnant to me as the foolishness of some of the legends. I think even that if I had to choose I should prefer the legends, for in them at least there is always some poetry and something of the soul of a people.

The task, therefore, which I now undertake—the modest task of merely explaining and popularising my subject—is justified by the great progress of learned research. Yet I have taken up my pen only in response to so many and such insistent entreaties as almost compelled me to comply with them for the sake of peace.[1]

The people who so pressed me are, for the most part, not literary, and will not therefore defend me against the critics. But sensible and understanding people will comprehend why, for instance, I have not encumbered my text with discussions and bibliography, why I have not lingered long over the very first beginnings, and why, without entirely ignoring theologians and their work, I have not devoted overmuch attention to their quarrels. There is a time and place for everything. I hope I shall also be forgiven a tendency to limit my speculations. I look up to those superior people who wish to know everything, and admire the artistic ingenuity with which, by the help of a little most seductive hypothesis, they prolong into the realm of the imaginary those vistas into the past which reliable investigation has opened out. But for my own part, I prefer solid ground: I would rather go less far and walk securely—*non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem.*

[1] I have also been influenced, I must confess, by the desire to stop the circulation of some old lecture notes, lithographed about thirty years ago, which it seems to me has gone on too long for my reputation.

ROME, *Nov.* 22, 1905.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

THIS book was so kindly received that a second edition had to be prepared two months after its first appearance. No alterations have been made, beyond slight changes on three pages:—p. 320, the discovery of the Greek Text of Hippolytus has been noted; p. 460, the biographical details on Julius Africanus given in a recently discovered papyrus are made use of; p. 353, note 2, the original comment on a difference between the translation of the Septuagint and that of St Jerome's version has been modified according to the advice of a learned Hebraist.

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AT the moment when Christianity came into the world, the Roman Empire was established in peace throughout all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. It coincided almost exactly with what is now the continent of Europe, but was more isolated. The very existence of America was still unsuspected, and the great masses in China, India, and the interior of Africa were as ignorant of the Mediterranean as the people on the shores of that sea were of them. It was indeed possible to communicate with those almost fabulous regions by the Nile, or by the gulfs on either side of the Arabian peninsula, which open into the Indian Sea: it was in fact along these highways of the world that the empires of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, and Susiana had flourished from remote antiquity. But, notwithstanding their geographical situation, so apparently favourable for communication with distant lands, these states seem always to have been practically closed towards the east. Their victorious and civilizing expansion was towards the Mediterranean: and on that side they finally

came into conflict with other younger and stronger nations, destined to stop their farther development and history, and to replace them in the political government of western Asia.

In the 6th century before the Christian era, the Nile and the Euphrates were both under the dominion of the Persians, an enterprising race, whose conquests extended to the Ægean and the Danube on the west, and on the east to the Indus. Two hundred years later, Alexander broke up this short-lived empire, and brought the East into subjection to Greece. This political settlement, which he intended to crown his magnificent enterprises, proved indeed of very short duration. But the Macedonian conquest of Persia remains notable as bringing to the East the spirit of Hellenism. Alexander launched these countries, which possessed an ancient and vigorous civilization of their own, on a course destined to lead them to a fate quite different from that of his own empire. It is true that Iran, carrying with it its former vassals on the Tigris and the Euphrates, soon regained its freedom and lived its own life, independent of the Greek kingdoms. But neither the Parthian kings nor their successors, the Sassanides, ever succeeded in recapturing the position Darius or Assurbanipal had held in the eyes of the western world. That was denied them; for though the Greek kingdoms fell, the armies of Rome took their place, and the frontiers remained unchanged for centuries. Mistress of Italy, victorious at Carthage and in Greece, Rome broke up the kingdom of the Seleucidæ (64 B.C.), and thirty years later inherited the land of the Ptolemies. The whole Mediterranean, from Antioch to Spain, acknowledged her supremacy. Julius Cæsar gave her Gaul; Augustus extended her frontier to the Danube, and Claudius to Scotland. On the north the Roman world impinged only on barbaric peoples; the ocean formed the western boundary, the desert the southern frontier. It was but on the east, towards the Tigris and Armenia, that Roman territory was coterminous with that of another empire, and even there, from the Euxine to the Red Sea, a line of small

tributary kingdoms intervened between the Parthians and the Roman Empire.

It was in one of these small tributary kingdoms, in Judæa, that Christianity first appeared. Judaism, which had preceded and prepared the way for it, was at the outset represented in this corner of southern Syria by the religious life of a little people of various tribes, knit together first into one and then into two kingdoms, which were of short duration, and finally succumbed to the attacks of the Assyrians and Chaldees. When this last catastrophe took place (590 B.C.), their religious life, which had been gradually purified by inspired prophets, centred round the national sanctuary at Jerusalem. There, One God only was worshipped: He was worshipped as the only true God and Lord, before whom all other so-called divinities were but idols and demons. Israel recognised this One God as the Maker and Master of the world; he knew himself bound to this God by ancient and special covenants. Jahvé, the Creator, was his own God, as he was the chosen of Jahvé. Hence arose an exalted sense of his dignity, race, and vocation; hence came an unshakable confidence in his destiny, and in the God who had ordained it.

The Temple was destroyed, the kingly dynasty suppressed, the whole people dispersed in distant exile; but Israel still hoped on, and his hope was not vain. The Persians destroyed the Chaldean Empire, they took and pillaged the hated city of Babylon, and finally they allowed the Jews to rebuild their sanctuary, to settle round it, and even to fortify Jerusalem. National independence was gone, but the Jews consoled themselves by drawing closer and closer the bonds which united the Children of Israel to Jahvé, and to each other in Him. The rulers of Susa allowed a considerable measure of local self-government; so did the Ptolemies and also the Seleucidæ, until Antiochus Epiphanes conceived the mad scheme of hellenizing the people of God. Then the Jews' defence of their religion culminated in insurrection. From this insurrection, crowned by success, arose an autonomous state

governed by the Asmonean high priests, the sons of the heroes of the independence. Little by little, these priests became kings of Judea. Their rule lasted nearly a hundred years, until the Romans came. Pompey, who put an end to the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, and took Jerusalem (63 B.C.), practically continued the same state of things. But Antony (40 B.C.) replaced the last Asmoneans by a native adventurer, Herod, the man called Herod the Great. It is with his name that the Gospel begins.[1] When he died (750 A.U.C. = 4 B.C.), the vast kingdom assigned to him was divided into three; the part which included Jerusalem fell to the share of his son Archelaus; he reigned until 6 A.D. Then he was deposed and replaced by legates, who, except during an interval of three years (Herod Agrippa, 42-44), governed in succession until the great insurrection of 66 A.D.

When this insurrection broke out, Christianity was already in being, and the lines of its future propaganda laid down. They did not lead it at first towards the East; it was only later that it took root in Parthia. From the first its eyes were turned towards the world of Greece and of the Roman Empire.

This Roman Empire, notwithstanding the many scandals of which Rome was the scene, secured peace, safety, and even liberty, in so far as it favoured the growth of municipal organization. The provinces were governed, some by pro-consuls elected annually in the name of the Senate, others by procurators (*legatus pro prætore*), appointed in that of the emperor, and might be considered as groups of communal districts presided over by magistrates elected in the chief city. In countries where municipal rule was not introduced, the self-government was differently organized. The government officials, excepting those concerned with taxation, were few; the administration of justice, except in criminal cases—and that not everywhere—remained in the hands of the municipal magistrates. Those, however, who enjoyed the right of Roman citizenship could only be tried by Roman tribunals. Only

[1] St Matt. ii. 1; St Luke i. 5.

frontier provinces were garrisoned by imperial troops; the maintenance of internal peace was still a local affair, and entrusted to the local authorities. This liberal organization never led to serious disorder; care had been taken that the municipal power should lie in the hands of the upper classes; the populace had no influence in the communal government.

Under this rule, the world prospered, and the civilization of Greece and Rome rapidly gained ground in lands where different customs, or actual barbarism, had prevailed. The country places still retained their ancient dialects—Celtic, Punic, Iberian, Illyrian, Syriac, and Egyptian; but in the towns hardly anything was spoken but Greek or Latin. A vast system of roads bound together the different parts of the empire; along them travelled both private carriages and the imperial posts. The Mediterranean itself formed a great water-way, where travelling was safe and rapid; intercourse between the various parts of the empire, being made easy, became incessant.

In this great body, however, pulsated more material than intellectual life. The age of Augustus was past; no poetry or eloquence glowed; grammarians had succeeded the great writers. Philosophy itself was under eclipse. The most prominent sects, the Epicureans and the Stoics, interested themselves but little in metaphysics; and those rare souls who still meditated, such as Seneca, meditated only on morality. In Rome, a few noble characters, Thrasea and Helvidius Priscus, for instance, kept alive the protest of the human conscience against the tyranny of the Cæsars and the Flavians, together with a half-appeal to a vanished liberty. But neither their public-spirited protest, nor the speculations of philosophy, had any appreciable influence on the populace of Rome or the masses in the provinces.

As to religion, the upper classes were generally sceptical. Hardly anything remained of the ancient Roman or Greek rites except the official ceremonies. The old Roman religion had but little besides rites and ceremonies. It adored abstract divinities, without form, without poetry, sometimes even without a name. The imagination of

the Greeks, on the contrary, had transformed the abstract conceptions of primitive naturalism into brilliant beings—men, but transcendently beautiful, strong, and intelligent. Their poets sang the exploits and adventures of these seductive immortals, but no serious theology ever came from their Pantheon. It is true that philosophy exerted all its ingenuity to connect these religious fables with nature-myths, but the result was rather to discredit than to explain them. Thus diverted from the Olympus of tradition, the religious instinct turned to the mysteries, which claimed to have discovered the clue to the eternal enigmas of the universe, to deliver the captive soul, and to assure it of happiness in another life. But the Greek initiations hardly touched the people; and some which endangered morality were either restricted or altogether prohibited. The Roman conquest of the East and of Egypt introduced other religious elements. Noisy, exciting, and immoral cults spread in all directions, and to their ceremonies men and women, rich and poor, free-men and slaves, were admitted indiscriminately. From Egypt came the mysteries of Isis and Serapis, from Syria those of Adonis and Astarté, from Persia that of Mithras, and from Phrygia those of Cybele and of Sabazius. Everywhere endless associations sprang up in honour of these new deities, whose worship soon supplied the common religious instinct with a food sadly wanting in the official ceremonies.

The official ceremonies, indeed, were undergoing a transformation. The ancient national sanctuaries, no doubt, were still served, but a new divinity, more present and more potent, was set up beside the old ones, and threatened to supplant them. This was the worship of Rome and of Augustus,[1] which first appeared in the provinces, under the Emperor Augustus, and spread with extreme rapidity. In every province an assembly of delegates from the cities met each year in a temple consecrated to Rome

[1] In this formula, the name Augustus does not mean the Emperor Octavianus-Augustus in particular, but the living Augustus, the emperor reigning at the time.

and the emperor. These delegates elected as priest one of themselves, who for the ensuing year held his sacerdotal office in the name of the province, under the title of *flamen* or *sacerdos*, ἀρχιερεύς (high priest). Sacrifices, and, above all, public games, were celebrated in the most solemn manner, and then, having inquired into the administration of the retiring priest, the assembly separated. Besides these provincial ceremonies, the worship of Rome and Augustus had temples and municipal priests in almost every town, as well as religious associations. Following the lines of the municipal and provincial organizations, and connecting them by a sort of sacred bond to the supreme government of the empire, it soon became the most obvious representation of the religion of the State.

All these forms of worship, so various in origin and meaning, existed side by side, and no one of them claimed a monopoly. Every man, according to taste and convenience, made his choice amongst them, and, broadly speaking, all were allowed, according to circumstances. Christianity did not find the ground unoccupied. When the souls of men opened to it, not only had it to root out a special attachment to such and such a form of worship, but also a certain sympathy with the many pagan cults which had gradually won their way into the popular devotion.

From all this it is clear that Christianity found both facilities and obstacles in the Roman Empire. Foremost among the facilities come universal peace, uniformity of language and ideas, and rapid and safe communication. Philosophy, by the blows it had struck at old pagan legends, and by its impotence to replace them, may also be reckoned as a useful auxiliary ; the Fathers of the Church speak of paganism in the same tone as Lucian. Finally, the religions of the East, by feeding the religious instinct, had prevented its perishing and kept it alive, to await the new birth of the Gospel. These were the facilities, but what obstacles stood in the way! The Roman Empire soon took to persecution, and over and over again engaged

in a death struggle with Christianity. The spirit of reasoning in Greek philosophy seized on the doctrinal elements of Christian teaching, and produced plenty of heresies. As to the popular pagan cults, although they had tended to preserve the religious instinct, yet from them could come no assistance in the warfare against those selfish and shameful passions, which in nations, as in individuals, always form the most serious obstacle to the work of salvation.

CHAPTER II

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

Judaism in the empire and in Palestine. The disciples of Jesus: their preaching and their organization. Saul of Tarsus. First conversions amongst Gentiles predisposed to Judaism.

"SALVATION is of the Jews," said Jesus to the woman of Samaria. This saying is characteristic of the external aspect of the Gospel mission. Jerusalem was its starting-point, and it was in passing through the Jewish colonies, established more or less throughout the whole empire, that it touched the heathen races.

After Alexander and the Romans had opened up the world, Judaism left the parent hive. Outside Palestine, its cradle, it had had, since the exile, an important settlement in Babylon. Babylon, however, may be ignored in a history of primitive Christianity. Not so the Jewish colony at Alexandria, which formed about two-fifths of the population of that great town. From Alexandria emanated, besides the exegesis of Philo, the canonical book of Wisdom and several important apocryphal books. However, we need not dwell on the evangelization of Egypt either, for it is shrouded in obscurity. All the principal towns throughout the empire had a more or less large Jewish population, engaged in the smaller branches of commerce, and protected by special privileges, which had been renewed several times since the days of Alexander's earliest successors. The children of Israel assembled in their synagogues to listen to the reading and explanation of the Holy Books, to pray in common,

and to transact the spiritual and temporal affairs of the local congregation. Their religious discipline required them, first of all, to separate themselves as absolutely as possible from the heathen, then to have faith in the God of Israel, to acknowledge the Messianic hope, and to observe the Law, as modified, however, by circumstances, and freed from the narrow formalism of Jerusalem.

In Palestine, the one sanctuary of the worship of Jahvé, the Temple, retained its high prestige. The sacerdotal hierarchy, swayed by the aristocratic Sadducean party, strictly maintained the ritual observances. But the luxury, the depravity, the religious indifference of these sacerdotal leaders, their subserviency to the Roman authorities, their contempt for the Messianic hope and the doctrine of the resurrection, had alienated from them the affection of the people, and, in the eyes of some, even cast discredit on the Temple itself. Some indeed were so much disgusted that they fled from the official sanctuary and its servants, and, afar from the world, devoted themselves to the service of God and a strict observance of the Law. The Essenes represented this movement: grouped in small communities they lived on the borders of the Dead Sea, near Engaddi.

The Sadducean priests persecuted Jesus Christ and His disciples. As for the Essenes, they lived alongside of the new Faith, and if they did embrace it, it was but slowly. The Pharisees, so often condemned in the Gospels for their hypocrisy, their false zeal, and their peculiar practices, did not form a special sect; the name was applied generally to all those who were ultra-scrupulous in following the Law, and not the Law only, but the thousand observances with which they had amplified it, attributing as much importance to them as to the fundamental precepts of morality. Still, they were faithful defenders of the Messianic hope and of belief in the resurrection. Beneath their proud and overstrained attachment to details of observance, they had a solid foundation of faith and piety. Amongst them the Gospel made many excellent converts.

But what circumstances first attended that movement

in the religious world of Palestine, which culminated in the foundation of the Church? All accounts agree in pointing out as its starting-point a small group of persons living in Jerusalem during the last years of the Emperor Tiberius (30-37 A.D.). These first believers acknowledged the name and doctrine of Jesus of Nazareth, recently condemned to death by order of the procurator Pilate, at the instigation of the Jewish authorities. Many of them had known Him in life; all knew that He had been crucified; all believed also that He had risen from the dead; although only a few of their number had actually rejoiced over His presence after His resurrection. They believed Him to be the promised and expected Messiah, the Messenger, the Son of God, who was to re-establish in the world a reign of righteousness and bring about the final triumph of good over evil. He had promised to found a kingdom, the Kingdom of God, from which the wicked should be excluded, and which would be open to all who loved Him. His death indeed had delayed the accomplishment of this promise; but its certain fulfilment was pledged to them by the triumphant defeat of death in the resurrection of the Master. He was now seated at the right hand of God, His Father, and from thence He would come again to manifest His glory and to found His Kingdom.

Meanwhile, His faithful followers went about spreading the good news, the Gospel, and thus gathering in the elect. They lived in close spiritual union: the same faith, the same expectation, bound them closely to one another. The leaders were twelve men who, during the preceding years, had lived in His most intimate circle; they had received from Jesus's lips the teaching they imparted in His name, and they could bear witness to His miracles. This intimacy with their Master had not indeed prevented their forsaking Him at the critical moment, and it was not without a struggle that they acknowledged His resurrection. But it was manifest before long that now their convictions were proof against all contradiction and all trials.

This first group of the faithful were still deeply imbued with the Jewish spirit. Between them and the pious Jews there was scarcely room for dissension. All that the sincerely religious people of their nation believed, hoped, and practised, they also believed, hoped, and practised. They went with the rest to the Temple; they submitted to the common observances of the Law. One point alone distinguished them: for them the Messiah did not belong to a vague, uncertain future. They had found Him, for He had come and had revealed Himself: and they were sure of seeing Him again soon.

But if there was nothing in all this which ran counter to Jewish ideas or prejudices, it was not likely that such an expectation, and the social ties it led to, would suit the Jewish priesthood, or fail to affect it. To acknowledge the claim of Jesus, and specially to point to Him as the Hope of Israel, was to protest against the execution of One whom the rulers of the nation had thought dangerous, guilty, and worthy of death. Besides this, the popular movement which had so greatly alarmed the high priest was appearing in another form. Quiet preaching had replaced the loud acclamations, but there seemed already more steady adherents than during the lifetime of Jesus; they were increasing every day, and enrolling in an organized society. They had their leaders—the very friends whom Jesus had gathered round Him in Galilee at the first.

In these circumstances it would have been surprising had the Jewish authorities not made life difficult for the disciples of Jesus. And this is just what they did, as the book of the Acts records.[1] The apostles, when arrested and reprimanded, defied all prohibitions, and neither stripes nor imprisonment intimidated them. The priests, however, had not a free hand. The governor apparently was not inclined to lend himself to new condemnations. But there was worse to come. Stephen, one of the first converts, a zealous helper of the apostles, was accused of blasphemy against the Holy Place and against the Law of

[1] *Cf.* St Matt. x. 16-24; 1 Thess. ii. 14.

Moses. To judge by the speech he is described as making in the Acts of the Apostles, it does seem that his words were rather peculiarly vehement. At any rate, the Sanhedrim, perhaps encouraged by the weakness of the governor, or taking advantage of the post being temporarily vacant, pronounced sentence of death against Stephen, and caused him to be stoned in the traditional manner. They followed this up with severe measures against the faithful, and the terrified community dispersed for a time. But the alarm did not last long, and the "Church," as it now began to be called, soon came together again.

The internal organization of the Church seems to have been very simple. Converts were admitted by baptism, the symbol of their union with Jesus, in whose name it was administered, and also of the conversion, the moral reform promised by the believer. A common daily meal was the sign and bond of their corporate life. There they celebrated the Eucharist, a perceptible and mysterious memorial of the invisible Master. In those first days the desire for a common life was so intense that they even practised community of goods. This led to administrative developments; the apostles chose out seven helpers who were the fore-runners of the Deacons. A little later there appeared an intermediate dignity, a council of elders (*presbyteri*, priests), who assisted the apostles in general management and took counsel with them.

Although this first Christian community grew rather rapidly, it soon had to give up the hope of incorporating the main body of Palestinian Jews. Its missionary work came into conflict not only with the ill-will of the religious authorities, but also with public opinion. Opposed in Jerusalem, it spread in other directions, apparently rather to suit circumstances than according to any preconceived plan. The dispersion, following on the death of Stephen, scattered far and wide many enthusiastic believers, and they spread the "good news" not only throughout Palestine, but further still, in Phenicia and Syria, and even as far as the island of Cyprus. Galilee, the first home of the

Gospel, still preserved a nucleus of the early disciples; they were also found even at Damascus, in the kingdom of Arabia. It was at this time, and in these circumstances, that the infant Church gained the most unexpected adherent in the person of Saul of Tarsus, an eager and learned zealot of the Law, and till then a fanatical persecutor of the disciples of Jesus. Converted by a vision of the Lord as he journeyed from Jerusalem to Damascus, he joined himself first to the Christians there, and then began to evangelize the kingdom of Arabia.

Like all the first converts, Saul was a Jew by birth, imbued with the exclusive and disdainful spirit which inspired his race and influenced all their dealings with other nations. In this little Jewish world, it was taken for granted that the Kingdom of God was for the people of God, for the privileged race whom He had loaded with favours, and to whom He had made so many promises. But the people of God, as a whole, seemed but little disposed to join the ranks of believers in Jesus, and so there gradually arose among these latter a tendency to enlarge the borders of their community. Some of them, driven from Jerusalem by persecution, made their appeal to men like the minister of the Queen of Ethiopia and the centurion Cornelius, who were well disposed towards the Jewish faith, and who practised it to some extent. Even the Samaritans were attracted by the preaching of the Gospel. The book of the Acts relates some typical and characteristic episodes which, even when they do not expressly say so, convey the impression that such conversions were not unattended with difficulty. The admission of the centurion Cornelius and his companions into the Church roused such strong opposition among the Christians in Jerusalem, that the Apostle Peter found it necessary to confute them; but he did so only by sheltering himself under a Divine intervention.

The events and developments so far related lie between 30 A.D. and 42 A.D.; this is practically all that can be said as to the chronology, which, for want of precise data, is very vague in details. In 42 A.D. a Jewish king

again reigned in Jerusalem—Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great. For several years he had governed the tetrarchies of Philip and of Herod Antipas (*i.e.*, the country beyond Jordan and Galilee). The favour of the Emperor Claudius then established him in the Holy City, and he reigned there three years: and they were hard years for the Christian community. It was to the interest of Agrippa to flatter the chiefs of the sacerdotal aristocracy, and they used him as the tool of their ill-will against the disciples of Jesus, several of whom suffered in consequence. One of the most prominent apostles, James, the son of Zebedee, was beheaded; Peter was also arrested; he only escaped the same fate by a miracle.

But Herod Agrippa died soon after (44 A.D.); the rule of procurators was re-established, and the faithful enjoyed comparative security.

According to an ancient tradition, the dispersion of the twelve apostles took place at this time; until then they had remained in the community in Jerusalem. The violence of Herod had been especially directed against them, and would quite explain their departure. Nevertheless, Peter was certainly still in Jerusalem some years later.[1]

[1] On this tradition, see Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 243, and Dobschütz, *Texte und Unters.*, vol. xi., Pt. I., p. 51. Harnack attaches, I think, too much importance to this tradition, which seems to emanate from some apocryphal source, such as the "Preaching" of Peter.

CHAPTER III

ANTIOCH AND THE MISSIONS OF ST PAUL

Hellenist Jews. Foundation of a Christian community at Antioch The mission of Paul and Barnabas in Upper Asia Minor. The position of pagan converts: internal conflicts. St Paul in Macedonia, in Greece, and in Ephesus: his return to Jerusalem: his position among the Jewish Christians: his letters: his captivity.

In the early Christian society the most strongly traditional and conservative elements from the Jewish point of view were represented by the converts from the Judaism of Palestine, who spoke Aramaic, and were necessarily impervious to external influences. But even in Jerusalem there were Jews by birth and religion who were not Jewish in language or country. These came from Jewish colonies long settled in Greek lands. They felt more at home in their native surroundings, which differed widely from those of the Holy City. And in spite of their attachment to the national traditions and religious observances of their mother country, they had too many points of contact with Hellenism not to be rather susceptible to new impressions. From the outset, a certain number of these Grecian Jews dwelling in Jerusalem attached themselves to the apostles. When for a time persecution dispersed the community in Jerusalem, some of these converts carried the Gospel to the towns on the Phenician coast, to the island of Cyprus, and as far as Antioch. There were even some—they were natives of Cyprus and Cyrene—who went so far as to preach to the "Greeks" of Antioch—to men, that is, who,

however well disposed they may have been towards the God of Israel, yet were not of the circumcision. Many were converted, and formed the nucleus of the Church at Antioch, which quickly became a second centre of Christian development, and especially of evangelization.

The Church in Antioch was organized by Barnabas, a believer, of Cypriote origin, and one of the first and most zealous of the early disciples. The community at Jerusalem at once was moved by this influx of Gentiles to commission Barnabas to organize matters. They could not have made a better choice. Barnabas had sufficient breadth of mind to grasp the situation and to discern the future lying before this new group. He took with him as associate, Saul, the converted persecutor, who for some time had been back in Tarsus, his own country. Thanks to them, the number of the faithful increased rapidly. And it was at Antioch that the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians,[1] *i.e.*, the people of the Messiah or the Christ.

In Antioch was organized the first mission to distant lands. And it was Saul and Barnabas again who were in charge of it. They sailed first to Cyprus, and traversed the island from Salamis to Paphos, where Sergius Paulus, the pro-consul, impressed by their miracles, embraced the faith. Thence they went over into Asia Minor, and made a long stay in different places in Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. They stopped in towns where there were Jewish colonies, and on the Saturday sought the synagogue, and there began their preaching. Among the actual Jews they had but limited success; but the Jewish proselytes, "the people who feared God"—that is, pagans who had more or less accepted the monotheism of the Jews—were more ready to listen. There were many conversions among these, and even among the actual pagans, to whom

[1] Besides the passage in the Acts (xi. 26), where this name first appears, it is only used twice in the New Testament (Acts xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 16), and then as a name used by non-Christians. It is not found, either, in the Apostolic Fathers, except in St Ignatius, who was a native of Antioch (Harnack, *Mission*, p. 295).

the apostles turned when banished from the synagogues. After four or five years, the missionaries went back to Antioch, leaving behind, in each town where they had sojourned, a little Christian community, distinct from the Jewish communities, and organized under the guidance of "elders" (*presbyteri*, priests) installed by the apostles.

Saul, who was now called Paul, and his companion Barnabas were warmly welcomed by the Church. The conversions they had effected, and particularly their success among the actual pagans, could not but arouse the deepest interest. A problem, however, which had already presented itself in the community of Antioch, now assumed an urgent character. Under what conditions could they accept these new converts, drawn either directly from the heathen ranks or from the Jewish proselytes? Was it necessary to impose upon them all the religious obligations which bound Jews by birth, and, above all, must they submit to circumcision? Many, and especially the missionaries themselves, thought not. Other influential people were inclined to be stricter. Dissensions arose, and it was agreed to appeal to the apostles and "elders" at Jerusalem. A deputation set out from Antioch for the Holy City, Paul and Barnabas being of the number. At first they met with very decided opposition, as may be imagined in such surroundings. But those in authority, especially Peter, John, and James, the brother of the Lord, sided with Paul and Barnabas, and their view prevailed. The idea was apparently, that just as everywhere there were proselytes admitted to the meetings in the synagogues by the side of the Jews proper, so the Christian Church might allow two classes of believers, equally privileged as to initiation in the mysteries of Christianity, though not both incorporated into Judaism. Judas Barsabbas and Silas, two members of the Church at Jerusalem, carried a letter notifying this decision to the Church at Antioch.

It seemed at first as if this settled the matter, but this was not so. Defeated on the principal points at issue, the Jews who advocated strict observance, fell back on the

details. They could not prevent pagans having the Gospel preached to them, or their admission into the community, but they tried to assign them a place apart. One of the points upon which the Jewish scruples turned was that of meals. To eat with heathen, with the uncircumcised, was most repugnant to Israelites of the old school. And this was a crucial question, because the chief religious act of the Christian community was precisely a common meal. If in any particular place the faithful could not eat together, there was an end of communion and unity. The issue of such a state of things would have been, not Christian brotherhood, but a religious society divided into two strata, as was, later, the sect of the Manicheans.

In Jerusalem, among Jews, this danger was not realised; but Paul, who saw much further, was distressed to observe, that even in Antioch the circumcised held themselves aloof from the uncircumcised. On Peter's coming to the Syrian capital, Paul induced him to accept his view, and to eat with uncircumcised Christians. But the Jewish party kept an eye upon the Head of the Apostles. Persons sent by James, or giving out that they had been sent by him, came from Jerusalem, and caused Peter to change his attitude. His defection was followed by that of many others. Even Barnabas separated from the companion of his apostolical labours. But Paul never wavered. He opposed the great chief of the faithful to his face, and reproached him, in rather hard terms, for inconsistency.

We do not know what was the immediate and local issue of this dispute. One thing, however, is certain, and it is that the opinions of Paul finally prevailed in the organization of the Christian societies. This was, in fact, inevitable. The Jewish converts, except in Palestine, were already in a minority, which diminished as time went on. The spread of Christianity, which had begun with them, now advanced independently.

To the achievement of this result, Paul devoted the remainder of his career. He set out at once for Asia

Minor—no longer with Barnabas, for between them there was still some coolness, both on account of the recent conflict, and for other reasons,[1] but with Silas, a distinguished Christian from Jerusalem, who had evidently come over to Paul's views. On his way through Lycaonia he picked up a valuable assistant, Timothy, the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He had him circumcised, for he knew how to bend to circumstances, and had no wish to create unnecessary difficulties. By way of Phrygia and Galatia, he reached the port of Troas in Mysia, and from thence passed over into Macedonia; after staying some time in Philippi, Thessalonica, and other places, Paul embarked for Athens, where he remained a short time, and finally settled himself for eighteen months at Corinth (53-54 A.D.). This is known as his second missionary journey. Thence he embarked for Ephesus, where he made no stay, and passing through Cæsarea in Palestine, returned to Antioch.

He did not remain long in Antioch, and soon set out again on his third journey. Traversing Asia Minor from east to west, he reached Ephesus, where he remained for three years (55-57 A.D.). At Ephesus he found two Roman Christians of some standing, Aquila and Priscilla, who had already welcomed him at Corinth during his last voyage. It does not appear that Aquila and his wife had taken part in evangelistic work. But, before the arrival of Paul, they had had occasion to confer with Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew who preached the Gospel, but knew no other baptism than that of John. Apollos had made disciples who, in the hands of Paul, became the nucleus of the Ephesian Church. As a result of the preaching, first in the synagogue and afterwards elsewhere, this Church increased in numbers. And besides Ephesus, many other places in Asia Minor were now initiated into the Gospel mysteries. At last the apostle determined to return once more to Syria, but not without first visiting his Christian colonies in Macedonia and Achaia. He wintered at Corinth (57-58 A.D.), and in the

[1] Acts of the Apostles, xv. 36-39.

following spring, passing through Macedonia and by the coast of Asia, he definitely set sail for Phenicia and Palestine. About the Feast of Pentecost (58 A.D.)[1] he arrived at Jerusalem.

Paul thus returned to the cradle of Christianity, after long years spent in preaching the Gospel in distant lands, where no one else had as yet brought the "good news." He had laid solid and living foundations throughout the greater part of Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. Thanks to him, the great towns of Ephesus, Thessalonica, and Corinth, and many others also, had churches glowing with faith, zeal, and charity. What these great achievements had cost him may be imagined; indeed he tells us something of it in one of his letters;[2] besides all the necessary inconveniences of long journeys, hunger and thirst, brigands and shipwrecks, he enumerates the results of his conflicts with the authorities, scourgings, stonings, "stripes above measure." The apostle was also a martyr. No one else had laboured or suffered more for the common faith. He brought to the mother church of Jerusalem the homage of his new foundations, and also, in token of their respectful love, a large tribute in alms. Yet he was far from hopeful as to the welcome awaiting him, and his misgivings, as was soon seen, were but too well founded.

The narrow spirit, which Paul's broad-minded tendency had encountered ten years ago, had been overcome in Antioch, but in Jerusalem things were very different. The apostles had long quitted the Holy City. And if in such surroundings there had ever been any men with a wider outlook, they seem to have followed the apostles, and had either migrated to Antioch or had taken to mission work. Thus left to themselves, the old conservatives could not but become more inveterately rigid. At

[1] This date has been much disputed. Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., pp. 233 *et seq.*, places it four or five years earlier. I cannot accept his arguments, to which Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 3rd ed., vol. i., p. 578, has sufficiently replied.

[2] 2 Cor. xi. 12.

their head was James, the brother of the Lord, who had been held in high esteem from the days of the first apostles, and had with them ruled the local church. He was renowned for sanctity and profoundly pious, but deeply attached to Jewish customs, and little inclined to minimize their obligatory character. The people about him had rather suffered Paul's boldness than acquiesced in it. From them had emanated the influences which for the moment divided the Christians in Antioch, and brought Peter and Paul into collision. They also sent out emissaries, who dogged Paul's footsteps in Asia Minor and Greece, and endeavoured to bring the Greeks and proselytes he had converted under the strict Judaic law, trying to impose circumcision upon them, and as a means to this end, striving to bring the apostle of the Gentiles into personal disrepute.

Over these conflicts and crises the peace-making book of the Acts passes very lightly. But by this time six letters of St Paul were already in circulation. They give us much more precise information. In the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, written during Paul's first visit to Corinth, there is no question, as yet, of this Judaizing opposition. The apostle pours out his heart to dearly-loved disciples; he recalls to their memory the trials they had to endure from the Jews, when Christianity was first preached to them. These trials have not ceased. They must be borne with patience. It is a pleasure to Paul to congratulate his Thessalonians on their attitude and conduct: he is proud of them. Their hearts are filled with the thought of the approaching advent of the Lord: the apostle answers their questions and does his best to calm them.

The Epistles to the Corinthians follow these idyllic letters, and both bear witness to some misunderstanding between the apostle and his neophytes. Their conduct seems to have given him more than one cause for complaint, but what hurts him most is, that different schools of opinion have grown up amongst them, and that his authority is called in question. Other missionaries

have passed through Corinth since his visit. Some have made a show of a more advanced teaching than that of Paul, who had had to keep to the elements of the faith. Others came with letters of commendation, making capital out of the name and authority of the great apostles, compared to whom, Paul, they would have you believe, was only a second-rate missionary. All this had led to divisions, and in the Church of Corinth there is one party of Paul and another of Apollos; others appeal to Peter, and others again to Christ Himself.

Yet there is nothing in these letters to lead to the conclusion that the apostle's rivals had introduced Judaizing tendencies in Corinth. The way in which Paul speaks of circumcision and of meats offered to idols,[1] implies rather that his mind was quite easy on that score.

It was not so in Galatia. This country, evangelized by Paul during his first mission, and which he had twice visited since then, contained several Christian communities which had every reason to consider him as their special director. To them came the Judaizing preachers, telling them that Paul was an apostle of whom they should beware, and that salvation could only be secured by circumcision. The good Galatians allowed themselves to be got hold of and circumcised. When Paul heard this, he hastened to write them a burning epistle, in which his indignation at the stupidity of his beloved disciples struggles hard with the paternal tenderness he feels for them. Paul was not of a very long-suffering disposition; these Judaizers suffer considerably at his hands in the letter to the Galatians.

The opinions which circumstances led him to express here in a more or less stormy manner, he repeats more calmly in his Epistle to the Romans,[2] written at Corinth during the winter preceding his return to Jerusalem.

Gentiles, Jews, all are sinners, some without the law, others under the law. The Jews have no advantage over the Gentiles, except their position as guardians of the Word of God. Salvation, justification, that is to say,

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 17-24; viii.-x. [2] Rom. i.-xi.

reconciliation with God, can only come through faith. This is the meaning of the dispensation which began with Abraham.

Sin had reigned since Adam, and death by sin, and from Jesus Christ, the second Adam, flows life-giving grace. The Law of Moses, formerly inefficacious, and apt rather to cause sin than to justify, was now abrogated and replaced by the Christian Law, the law of liberty, which consists in the simple obligation of conformity to Jesus Christ.

This theology sweeps away the Mosaic Law entirely, not only its obligation, but even its utility. The law is of no use; it is no advantage to be a Jew. Here Paul suddenly faces a question of actual fact. What is then the position of Israel? The apostle does not hesitate. In spite of his strong feeling of nationality, he declares that the mission of Israel is at an end, or rather that it is interrupted. God, angry at their unbelief, has turned His face from them; it is to the Gentiles now that the Promise is addressed. Israel is like a branch broken off from the olive tree, and in his place the Gentiles are grafted in. Yet the time will come when the remnant of the people of God will share in the heritage.

This manifesto, addressed to the Christians in Rome, and passed on to other Christian communities, must have preceded the apostle on his visit to Jerusalem. In the eyes of his adversaries it amounted to a declaration of apostasy.[1] The law, circumcision, Jewish life, the dignity of the people of God, he repudiates all. The reception awaiting him in the Holy City is easy to imagine. Just then the national feeling was much excited. The rapacious and brutal rule of the Roman procurators had alienated the minds of these turbulent people more and more from the empire. The official priesthood, swamped by the fanaticism of the zealots, felt their authority failing; tumults, suppressed with difficulty, were always threatening round the temple; insurrection was at hand. No doubt,

[1] This is the term which the book of the Acts puts in the mouth of the Judaizing party in Jerusalem: ἀποστασίαν διδάσκεις ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως.—Acts xxi. 21.

the faithful followers of Jesus, absorbed in their own hopes, were not drawn into these excesses; but, in the midst of all this fierce exasperation, how were they to possess their souls in patience?

Paul was welcomed by his friends, and presented himself before James the day after his arrival. There he found the council of "elders" assembled, and he told them of his apostolic journeys, of the churches which he had founded, and no doubt handed over to them at the same time the proceeds of the collection he had made for the needs of the mother-church. When he had finished, they began by congratulating him. Then they called his attention to the great number of Jewish converts,[1] to their extreme devotion to the Law, and to the unfortunate reputation which he (Paul) had amongst them. To remove these suspicions, the only thing for him to do was to prove, by some striking demonstration, that he had been calumniated, and that he was, as always, a faithful observer of the Law.

Paul, whose principle it was "to be all things to all men," accepted this solution of the difficulty. He joined four of the disciples, who had taken upon themselves the vow of Nazarites, allowed his head to be shorn, submitted with them to the customary ritual purifications, and took part with them in a series of devotional exercises in the Temple courts. These lasted seven days, and were concluded by a sacrifice. The writer of the Epistle to the Romans, after having bid such a decided farewell to the Law of Moses, again feels its weight upon his rebellious shoulders.

The ordeal was just over. God alone knows what would have happened when Paul found himself again face to face with those who had imposed it upon him. But suddenly the whole course of events was changed. If Paul was in bad odour among the Christian zealots, we may imagine that there was not much affection for him amongst the Jewish zealots. These latter saw him in the Temple, and at once made an uproar. He would have

[1] Πόσαι μυριάδες.

perished, had not the commander of the Roman garrison rescued him, protected him from the fanatics, and for his greater safety, sent him off to Cæsarea, to the procurator Felix. There he was formally accused by the heads of the Jewish priesthood, but not convicted. Finally, after being kept two years in Cæsarea, as he insisted upon his privilege as a Roman citizen, and his right to be judged by the emperor, he was sent to Rome.

Thus Paul escaped from internal dissensions to appear in the character of defender of the common faith. Like Jesus, he was denounced to the Romans by the Jews, his own countrymen.

But, at any rate, they distributed their hatred with impartiality, for James also, James the Judaizer, the head of the Judaizing Church, suffered from it. In 62 A.D. the high priest Annas the younger, taking advantage of the death of the procurator Festus, summoned James, with several other Christians, before the Sanhedrim, as violators of the Law, and sentenced them to be stoned. This sentence was immediately executed.

This enforced pause in the internal dissensions will serve for an inquiry as to what, in the eyes of the majority of Christian converts, was the relationship between the ancient Hebrew traditions and the new development introduced by the Gospel.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE

The religious tradition of Israel. The Law of Moses, and faith in Jesus Christ. Biblical education. The end of all things. The person of Christ: His divinity. Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Saviour. The Christian life: renunciation of the world; grouping in local confraternities. Religious assemblies on the lines of the synagogue. The Eucharist, the charismata. Organization of the infant churches.

THE Christian convert, whether from the ranks of pure Judaism or from the bosom of paganism, came into the community by an act of faith in Christ Jesus.

He believed that Jesus was the Messiah expected by Israel, that He had died and had risen again, as had been foretold in the sacred books of the Jews.[1] His faith in Christ was, as it were, wrapped up in a more comprehensive faith in the religious tradition of Israel, however that tradition might be restricted or interpreted by individual preachers. The most ardent disciple of St Paul, if faithful to his master's fundamental opinions, could never dream of representing Christianity as a perfectly new religion. Moses might have become less important, but Abraham remained, and with Abraham a whole series of facts, persons, beliefs, and institutions, linking the Gospel to primitive history, to the very beginning of the world, and to God, its Creator.

To the new disciple this hoary past was personified in a nation, living with vigorous religious life in its Palestinian

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3 *et seq.*

centre, and its colonies in the Hellenic world. It was, moreover, represented by a sacred literature, of which the latest productions were books of his own day. For if the Old Testament be considered as a storehouse of the memorials of ancient Israel, it certainly should include Josephus. He related for the public of his own time, and above all for the Christians, the catastrophes which ruined the Jewish nation. After his day, the Jews seemed schismatic and undeveloped Christians; before them, on the contrary, the Christians were progressive Jews.

Whatever these transient relations were, it is certain that Christianity has its roots in Jewish tradition, that the first crises in its history are those of the separation of mother and child, that Christianity always regarded Jewish history as the preface to its own, and that the sacred books of Israel are sacred also to the Christian; there was, indeed, a time when he knew no others.

Thus, admission into Christianity was necessarily and actually regarded as incorporation into Israel, an enlarged Israel it is true, but still fundamentally the same. As to this identity, however, opinions differed very early. The minds of the Jews of the 1st century were especially occupied with their national Law, and those of the Christians with their Founder and Head. The Judaic-Christians, who, of the two, preferred the Law, and only consented to the evangelization of the Gentiles under exceptional circumstances, were soon out of the main stream of opinion; in the 2nd century they were classed with heretics. Those who allowed the Gentiles a share in the privileges of the Gospel, although not on quite equal terms, were soon carried farther; and this not so much by the special influence of St Paul, as by the general trend of circumstances. They had to admit that to the Christian there was no equality between Jesus Christ and Moses; that the foundation is Jesus, and not the legislation of Sinai; that it is Faith that saves, and not the observance of the Law. The letters of St Paul, when they describe the first Christians, not as they were during times

of conflict but in their normal state, bear witness that this —except in Palestine—was the general position.

There is no doubt that the personal opinions of the apostle went much farther. But as to some of his theories, he does not appear to have been followed, *e.g.*, in his view of the Law as an occasion of sin.[1] The Church stopped short of his conception: the Law was considered as an abrogated rule, which had had only good effects in its time, and it was also acknowledged to have the value of a shadow, enhancing the new light of the Gospel, or even that of a figure, an imperfect type, a first attempt.

To represent the Christianity of the first Gentile converts as charging blindly against the Law (like St Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians), would be to misunderstand it very gravely. The greater number of early converts, who were what is termed *Hellenist-Christians*, were deeply dyed with Judaism. St Paul himself, we must repeat, is no doubt represented one-sidedly by some of his statements; we shall receive a more accurate impression of his ordinary attitude by dwelling on that which the Church has retained, rather than by attending exclusively to what the Church has either allowed to drop, or interpreted in her own way.

Thus the Jewish tradition, the Old Testament, was adopted in its entirety by Christianity. From this fact, a very important advantage accrued to the new converts. The Bible gave them a history, and what a history! This book carried them back much farther than any of the Greek traditions—any tradition, that is, based on a rational foundation, and not confusing men with gods. The Bible took them back far behind the Macedonians, the Persians, the Jews themselves as a nation, and finally touched the most ancient period of Egyptian and Chaldean archæology.[2]

[1] Rom. vii. 7-11.

[2] We know now that the stages of this development are much shorter in the Bible than they were in reality. But we are now dealing with the history as it appeared to the early believers, and not as it is now being continuously unfolded to us by the discoveries of archæology.

What is infinitely more important, is that it goes back to the very origin of things. It shows the world issuing from the creative hand of God, the introduction of evil by the abuse of liberty, the first propagation of mankind, and the foundation of the earliest human institutions.

But besides these magnificent stories, the Bible furnished many others, of a charm and utility which soon became apparent. A glance at the monuments of primitive Christian art is enough to show what glowing impressions sprang from tales like those of Job, Jonah, Daniel, Susanna, and the three young Jews in the fiery furnace. The prophetic books bore witness to the expectation of the people of God, they disclosed all the characteristics of the Messiah and His kingdom, and justified the cessation of sacrifices and other Mosaic rites. Even the Wisdom literature, side by side with precepts of common and continual use, furnished valuable insight into Uncreated Wisdom. Of the value of Psalter there is hardly need to speak; its admirable prayers have ever been on the lips of Christians, and are the corner-stone of their liturgy.

Of course, in accepting, or rather in retaining, books of such ancient date, and of such diverse character, the primitive Christian Church also accepted, or retained, the method in which these books were used both formerly and at that time. Whether at public readings in religious assemblies, as food for edification, or as a weapon in controversy, the Holy Scriptures always required interpretation. The character of these interpretations would vary according to the surroundings in which they were made, or the books to which they referred, but practically all interpretations agreed in assigning to the text a meaning applicable to the time then present, whether this meaning were or were not identical with that accepted when it first appeared. All those books are divine; the things which they tell us are the teaching of God Himself. This general principle, often proclaimed in the Church, is the very foundation of the religion of the Holy Scriptures, as

practised by the first Christians, and as it had been practised by the Jews before them.

The traditions of Israel did not, however, only provide the Christian with food for meditation on the past; they turned his mind also towards the future, towards the region of hope. Here too much distinction must not be drawn between the books of the Old Testament and those of the New, or between the canonical and apocryphal books. All accentuate one point, the end of all things is at hand; God will shortly avenge Himself; His Messiah will come, or will return. And in spite of certain isolated traits which show that St Paul was occasionally free from this obsession, there is no doubt it overshadowed the minds of the first Christians.

But the thoughts of the faithful were always brought back, from the origin of all things or from their final end, to their religious state in the actual present. They were Christians through Jesus Christ, because a Man called Jesus, whom most of them had never seen, had called them to Himself. This Man had died; He had risen again; he was seated now at the right hand of God. He would soon reappear in glory, and fight a decisive battle against evil. Who was He? Whence originated this conception of religious Leader, of powerful Representative of God, of Judge of all mankind? As the Jewish Messiah, He had a history behind Him; He had been predestinated by God, foretold and described by the prophets. One of His highest titles was that of Son of God. But on this most essential point there was no question of keeping within the Jewish tradition; the declarations of St Paul, St John, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, manifestly surpassed it. And their declarations only expanded the common belief, which, though at that time still wanting in power of expression, was deep and unyielding. Jesus, although He belonged, through the reality of His manhood, to the realm of visible creation, belonged also, in the very depth of His being, to the Godhead. How that could be was to be made clear by degrees. But the essence of this belief was in the

souls of Christians from the first. The New Testament reveals it in its earliest as in its latest books; following the New Testament, the early Christian books, whether orthodox or gnostic, all take this fundamental belief for granted, as universally accepted and firmly rooted in tradition.

And here considerable stress must be laid on the Jewish education, through which Christian thought had passed. Among pagans there were many ways of being divine; the old gods of Olympus were gods by birth, their genealogies were well known; others, however, were merely deified heroes. The Macedonian and Moorish kings, like many others, had been worshipped; so were the Roman emperors still. One god more or less was of no consequence to the polytheistic conscience.

It was quite otherwise with a conscience formed by the religious ideas of Israel. "Hear, O Israel! thy God, the God of Israel, is One." This credo is that of the modern, as of the ancient Jew, and expresses what is both most profound and most obvious in their religion. To admit that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are God, is to admit that they participate in the very essence of the One God, that they are, each of them, identical with Him, yet without being deprived of certain special characteristics.

This is the Christian doctrine of the Trinity; not certainly, as it was formulated later, in opposition to transient heresies, but as it appealed to the general conscience of the early Christians, and claimed the homage of their faith. The generality of Christians in the 1st century, even in apostolic days, stood here almost exactly at the same point as present-day Christians. Theologians knew, or at any rate said, far more about it. Our subject, however, is religion, and not the schools.

But Jesus is not only the Messiah and the Son of God, He is also the Saviour.[1] If He welcomes all His

[1] This is the definition expressed by the celebrated formula, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ, which also gave the anagram, ΙΧΘΥΣ, and the symbol of the fish.

faithful followers into the Kingdom of Heaven, it is that they are His; and if they are His, it is not only because they believe in Him, or have joined the fellowship of His Church, it is because He has bought them from spiritual slavery. He is their Redeemer, and it is by His death on the Cross that He has won His rights over them. We must not think that this conception, upon which St Paul insists so often and so strongly, is merely the result of his own personal reflections, nor even, as might be more easily allowed, that it is the result of a special inspiration to him. The moment that the Christian society was opened to pagans and Samaritans—and it was not St Paul who began this movement—it had to be conceded that the essential thing in the work of salvation, was not the Law, but Faith; that discipleship of Moses was not only of no avail without discipleship of Jesus, but further, that it could be dispensed with, and was only of secondary importance. It matters very little whether this view supported faith in redemption, or was inspired by it. St Paul tells us[1] that, finding himself at Jerusalem after his first mission, he communicated to the leaders of the Church, to Peter, James, and John, as well as to others, the Gospel which he had taught the Gentiles, in order, he says, not to "run in vain." We may wonder what he could have communicated to them, if he had passed over so important a point and one holding so prominent a place in his preaching. As his statement was not disputed, we must conclude that the redeeming efficacy of the Lord's death was from that time acknowledged by the apostles. Again, when Paul discusses the value of the Law with Judaizing adversaries, what is his chief argument? "If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain."[2] What would have been the point of such an argument if the Judaizers had not shared his belief in Redemption?

Thus, the education of the first generation of Christians included, side by side with many features derived from Jewish tradition, other quite characteristic doctrines of

[1] Gal. ii. 1, 2. [2] Gal. ii. 21.

its own, which could not fail, as they developed, to result in a great difference between the two religions.

And what was true of education was true of all Christian institutions. Look at the organization and life of the Christian society as it grew up throughout almost the whole Greek world, in consequence of the preaching of the apostles. The letters of St Paul give us here most valuable data.

To become a Christian was a very momentous step. On many points it was necessary for a man to separate himself entirely from ordinary life. For instance, the theatres, and, speaking generally, the public games, were schools of immorality, and foremost among the works of Satan which had to be renounced. So with sins of the flesh. The new Christian had of course to break with idolatry; but it was not always easy for him to avoid all contact with it, for the private life of the ancients was saturated with religion. Marriage, birth, seed-time, and harvest, the inauguration and functions of the magistracy, and family festivals—all were occasions requiring sacrifices, with oblations and incense and banquets. Paul permitted some concessions as to these last. He strictly forbade all participation in the religious feasts celebrated in the precincts of temples; but the fact that any particular piece of meat had formed part of a sacrificial victim was not, in his eyes, a reason for refusing it, provided nobody was scandalized. Here he showed himself more indulgent than they were at Jerusalem in 51 A.D., or than the synagogues were to their proselytes.

Separated as they were from paganism, it was necessary that the faithful should live together. Each Church formed in itself a complete society, the members of which, though they were bound, of course, by the fiscal or other laws of their city and the empire, were yet told to avoid carrying their differences before any other court than that of their own community. Christians intermarried with Christians. If one of the parties in a heathen marriage was converted, the marriage was only dissolved at the request of the one who remained

a pagan. But, with this exception, divorce was absolutely forbidden. Absolute virginity was praised and even recommended, in view of the near approach of the Last Day; but it was in no way enforced. In ordinary life, the Christian was to be submissive to the authorities, as to his master if he were a slave; idleness was a disgrace; uprightness and modesty, courtesy in social intercourse the cheerfulness of a single heart, charity, and especially hospitality, were all strongly inculcated.

The religious life was very like that of the synagogue. The faithful met to pray, and to read the Scriptures, in which the great examples of righteous men of old were specially studied. The specifically Christian elements of this primitive worship were the Eucharist and the *charismata* or extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist was celebrated in the evening, after a frugal meal (*agape*) taken in common. The Lord's Supper on the eve of His Passion was thus repeated. As to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, these appeared under various forms; sometimes there were miraculous cures or other wonderful manifestations; sometimes visions (ἀποκαλύψεις); sometimes an illumination of mind which manifested itself in a discourse on the mysteries of the Faith, or on the obligations of conscience (λόγος γνώσεως, λόγος σοφίας, πίστις). The most remarkable of these manifestations were prophecy and glossolalia (the gift of tongues). Prophecy was the gift of knowing hidden things, especially "the secrets of the heart."[1] This last gift, which was entirely temporary, must not be confused with another form of prophecy, possessed by certain persons in the apostolic age, such as Judas Barsabbas, Silas, Agabus,[2] and even, in the next generation, by the daughters of Philip, by Ammia, by Quadratus, and others to whom we shall refer later. In like manner, the gift of tongues, which, on the Day of Pentecost enabled the apostles to make themselves understood by people of different nationalities, had nothing in common with this other

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

[2] Acts xi. 27, 28; xv. 22, 32; xxi. 10, 11.

gift of glossolalia, described by St Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians. Neither the speaker with tongues himself, nor those present understood what he said; communication could not be established between them (or rather, between those present and the Holy Spirit), except by means of an inspired interpreter. Yet, even if such an interpreter were not present, it was possible to distinguish in the strange sounds uttered by the speaker, the accents of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving.

Such spiritual phenomena were well calculated to arrest the minds and to sustain the enthusiasm of the first Christians. But abuses followed hard on the use of them, and the use itself might have its drawbacks, if not wisely regulated. The Church at Corinth had only existed four years, and already St Paul is obliged to intervene and to regulate the inspiration of his converts. Even in the celebration of the Eucharist, it was not long before abuses began to creep in. The common meal, which was the first part of it, had to be made as simple as possible. Later on it was separated from the liturgy, and finally it was more or less completely suppressed. The ecclesiastical homily took the place of the primitive manifestations of the λόγος σοφίας. Visions, prophecies, and miraculous cures were not indeed destined to disappear entirely, but as they were not compatible with the regular order of the liturgical service, they soon dropped out of it.

No details of the rites of initiation into Christianity are found in the apostolic epistles, but nevertheless they very early assumed fixed and significant forms. For these ceremonies Paul relied on the practical help of his fellow-labourers.[1] Some of the faithful, not content with being baptised themselves, tried to be baptised also for their dead relations and friends.[2]

Among the charismata those should be specially noticed which pertained to the internal ministry of the community.[3] St Paul speaks of those members of the society who worked for it, presiding and exhorting, and of the duties of the faithful towards them; he mentions the

[1] 1 Cor. i. 14-17. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 29. [3] 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

"gifts of governments, helps," etc.[1] Soon the terms bishops, priests, and deacons make their appearance. But, in the beginning, the real or principal authority naturally remained in the hands of the missionaries, the founders. Their position was quite different from that of the neophytes who assisted them, at the moment in the practical details of the corporate life.

The meetings were held in private houses, chiefly in those large rooms on the upper storey, which have, at all times, been common in the East. In those countries people excel in the art of crowding themselves into a small space. The assemblies took place in the evening, and often lasted till far into the night. And, alongside of the Jewish Sabbath, Sunday was early devoted to divine worship.

A question has often been raised as to whether the first Christian communities, in Greek countries, were modelled on the pagan religious associations. There are some analogies, as, for instance, in the method of obtaining converts. The *thiasi*, the *erani*, and religious congregations of all kinds, like the Christian Churches, admitted, without distinction, foreigners, slaves, and women; the initiation was dignified by ritual which became very imposing; sacred feasts were celebrated. But these analogies do not go very far. Even apart from the differences of faith and morals, and of worship—which latter amongst the Pagans always involved a temple, an idol, and a sacrifice—there exists a radical contrast in the conception and distribution of authority. The heads of the pagan associations were always temporary and generally elected annually, whilst the Christian priests and deacons held office for life. The pagan leaders derived their powers from the community which had nominated them, of which they were only the agents; the Christian priests, on the contrary, spoke, acted, and governed, in the name of God and the apostles, whose auxiliaries and representatives they were.

A very little historic sense will, moreover, suffice to make clear to us that the first churches, being composed

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28, *γυβερνήσεις, ἀντιλήψεις.*

of converts from the synagogue, would tend to model themselves on that pattern; and that the missionary apostles, who had lived for a longer or a shorter time in the Christian communities at Jerusalem or Antioch, brought with them customs and traditions already well defined. They had no reason to turn to pagan institutions for a type of organization which they already possessed. And, moreover, the profound horror they felt for paganism told against any imitation of that kind.

On the whole, the Christian communities formed themselves on almost the same lines as the Jewish synagogues. Like the latter, they were religious societies, founded on a common faith and hope, though a faith and hope which knew no longer any barriers of race or nation. Like the synagogues, they tried to suppress any dangerous contact with pagan institutions; they offered their members a social life which was both very intense and very peaceful, and also a nearly complete organization which necessitated common funds, courts of justice, and charitable relief. Even in worship the resemblance is very great. In the synagogue as in the church,[1] they prayed, they read the Bible, they expounded it; but the Church had, in addition, the Eucharist and the exercise of spiritual gifts. And in these primitive times, the analogy went even farther. Just as the Jews of all countries considered themselves brothers in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so the Christian communities had a lively sense of their common brotherhood in Jesus Christ. Both look towards Jerusalem, which at this period is still the heart of Christianity, as of Judaism. But, whilst the eyes of the Jew turn towards the Temple as the centre of his memories and the pole-star of his hopes, the Christian meditates upon the spot where the cross of his Master once stood, where the witnesses of His resurrection still live, and whence came to them the apostolic chiefs whose words had gathered in from all parts the people of the New Covenant.

[1] Observe that these two words have the same meaning—"assembly"—and that both were also employed to denote the buildings in which the assembly met.

CHAPTER V

THE ORIGIN OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

The Jewish colony in Rome. Aquila and Priscilla. The Epistle to the Romans. Paul in Rome. First Roman Christians. Peter in Rome. Burning of Rome, 64 A.D. Nero's persecution.

THE Jewish princes of the Asmonæan house had dealings in very early times with Rome. Hence originated no doubt the Jewish community there. It received a sudden and important increase after the taking of Jerusalem by Pompey (63 B.C.).[1] The conqueror threw upon the Roman slave-market an immense number of prisoners of war. From the days of Augustus onwards, or even earlier, these Jewish prisoners, bought as slaves, and subsequently freed, formed a considerable colony, situated in Trastevere.[2] This colony was not protected, at any rate directly, by any such special privileges as those granted, by the ancient Macedonian kings and by Roman generals, to various Jewish colonies in the Hellenic or Hellenized East. Tiberius violated no engagement, therefore, when he expelled the Jews from Rome (19 A.D.[3]); they were then so numerous that it was possible to send 4000 of them to fight the barbarians of Sardinia. This ordinance, the pretext for which was a conversion much too advan-

[1] Schürer, *Geschichte der jüdischen Volkes*, etc., 3rd ed., vol. iii., p. 28.

[2] Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, 23.

[3] Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. 3, 5; Tacitus, *Ann.* ii. 85; Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 36.

tageous to the Jewish community, was inspired by Sejanus. Less severity was shown after the fall of that minister (31 A.D.), and when Philo came to Rome (40 A.D.) to plead the cause of the Alexandrian Jews before Caligula, the Roman Jews had regained their former position. Either the next year (41 A.D.) or soon after, Claudius granted them an edict of toleration;[1] but later he seems to have deemed repressive measures necessary.

It is at this time that the Gospel first appears in the history of the Jewish community in Rome. The Acts of the Apostles and Suetonius agree in saying that the Jews were driven from the capital. According to Dion Cassius, it had been found so difficult to carry out the threat of total expulsion[2] that the authorities confined themselves to forbidding all meetings. But certainly there were some expulsions: St Paul found at Corinth (52 A.D.) a Jew, Aquila, with his wife Priscilla, who had migrated there in consequence of the edict of Claudius. Aquila was a native of Pontus; he and his wife already professed Christianity. This is quite in accordance with what Suetonius says as to the motive of the Jewish expulsion: *Judæos impulsore Chresto*[3] *assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.*

It is evident, therefore, that the preaching of the Gospel had given rise to disturbances similar to those which the Acts of the Apostles so often describe in Jerusalem, in Asia Minor, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, and Ephesus. According to the Acts, Aquila and Priscilla, when they received St Paul at Corinth, had quite recently come from Italy; this edict of proscription and the troubles which occasioned it should therefore be ascribed to 51 or 52 A.D.

Here, then, we have the first ascertained fact, the first

[1] Josephus, *Ant.* xix. 5, 2.

[2] Acts xviii. 2; Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25; Dion, lx. 6.

[3] A vulgar confusion between Χρηστός and Χριστός. The Roman populace described Christians by the name of Chrestiani (Χρηστιανοί); *quos . . . vulgus Chrestianos appellabat.* This is the true reading of the celebrated phrase in Tacitus, *Ann.* xv. 44. (Harnack, *Die Mission*, p. 297).

assignable date, in the history of the Roman Church. To judge by what we know of the sequence of events elsewhere, the first preaching of the Gospel in Rome cannot have been much earlier: the Acts always describe serious disturbances in a Jewish community as following, as an immediate consequence, on the first efforts at evangelization. When St Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans (58 A.D. at the latest), their church had already been in existence, and he had been wishing to visit it, for several years.[1]

Whose hands had sown the Divine seed in this ground, where it was to bring forth such a prodigious harvest? We shall never know. Conjectures, built upon foundations too insecure to be sanctioned by history, take the Apostle Peter to Rome during the first years of Claudius (42 A.D.), or even under Caligula (39). There is nothing to prove that the Roman Jews, present at the first Pentecost, were converted; still less that they became missionaries. The centurion Cornelius, converted by St Peter at Cæsarea, was not necessarily a Roman of Rome; and we know nothing of the effect on the spread of Christianity of the conversion (ἐπίστευσεν) of Sergius Paulus,[2] the proconsul of Cyprus.

We will, therefore, dwell no longer on the mystery of its first origin, but merely state that when St Paul wrote to the Roman Church (58 A.D.), it was not only safely over the crisis which had attended its birth, but was well established, large, and well known, or even renowned, for faith and good works.

At this time, it had such a position that the Apostle of the Gentiles did not propose to take its place and labour in its stead for the evangelization of Rome, though that was naturally the most important, most tempting of fields for his zeal. His only desire was that whenever he carried his missionary journeys as far as Spain, he should profit by intercourse with it on the way, and should also contribute something to the instruction already received

[1] Ἀπὸ ἱκανῶν ἐτῶν (Rom. xv. 24).

[2] Acts xiii. 12.

by the Roman Christians. The ideas which he put before them (which seem to have been immediately communicated to other churches), his way of presenting them, and the practical exhortations by which he accompanied them, all give a clue to the elements composing the young community. Like most of the other churches, it had originated in a split in the local Jewish community. A number of born Jews, and probably a greater number of half-converted pagan proselytes (*φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν*) had been drawn away, and they constituted a new group in which they lived together amicably. There was little prospect that the Jewish section would grow much: the future of the Church lay with the other party.

This was a field of work just similar to that on which St Paul had been engaged for twelve years. If we except the transitory episode between Peter and Paul, the conditions in the Roman Church were those of the Church in Antioch, and also of the Churches in Galatia, Macedonia, Greece, and Asia, before the opposing Jewish mission came to breed dissension. It is impossible to estimate exactly the proportion of Jewish Christians and pagan Christians, to be found at any given moment, in the Roman community. One thing, however, is certain, and that is, that directly it was divorced from the synagogue, the prospects of evangelization among the pagans became more favourable, far more favourable. There had not yet, however, been any struggle between the two parties. The fanatics of Jerusalem had not appeared on the scene; the difficulties they had raised in Galatia and elsewhere had not yet come to the front in Rome.

What happened in the following years? Paul, arrested in Jerusalem and detained two years in Palestine, had to defer his projected journey into Spain. When he came to Italy (61 A.D.), under escort, and as a prisoner accused before the Imperial tribunal, he found Christians at Puteoli, who gave him a warm welcome. And the Roman Christians went out to meet him on the Appian Way.

As soon as he was settled,[1] he arranged an interview with the chief Jews in Rome (τοὺς ὄντας τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρώτους) and began to expound to them the Gospel, as if they had never heard it before. As might have been expected, the result was that a few new conversions were effected, but a very strong opposition was raised by the leaders.[2]

Paul's captivity lasted two years. One only of his writings of that date, the Epistle to the Philippians, throws any light on what was happening around him. The Judaizers had at last found their way also to Rome; and the Gospel was preached, not only by friends of the Apostle, but also by his enemies. He himself had made a sensation in the "Praetorium." Indeed, his presence in Rome was advantageous to the spread of Christianity; the Christians seemed confident rather than downcast. This gain diminished the grief he felt at the Judaizing opposition, which dogged his steps, and was not even disarmed by the chains he bore for the common faith.

His case was at length brought to trial. Like the procurators Felix and Festus, and King Agrippa II., the Imperial tribunal found that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment.

Set free, he no doubt took the opportunity to go to Spain, where the first beginnings of Christianity seem to be connected with him.[3] He also revisited his Christian colonies on the Ægean. Important traces of this last journey are to be found in his pastoral epistles to Titus and Timothy.

Several members of the primitive Church in Rome are known to us, at least by name. Even before he came to Rome, Paul had many friends there; at the end of his

[1] According to a variant, or very old gloss, on Acts xxviii. 16, Paul was given in charge, with other prisoners, to the commandant of the *Castra peregrinorum*. Their quarters were on the Coelian Hill, east of the temple of Claudius, in the direction of the present military hospital. Paul obtained leave to live outside the camp, *extra castra*. Cf. *Sitzungsber.* of the Academy of Berlin, 1895, p. 491-503 (Harnack and Mommsen).

[2] Acts xxviii.

[3] 1 Clem. 5.

Epistle to the Romans, he sends greetings to twenty-four persons by name: Aquila and Priscilla he had already met at Corinth and in Asia, where they had done him great service, they now in Rome formed the centre of a little Christian group, a kind of household Church; Epaenetus, the earliest believer in Asia; Mary, who had laboured much for the faith in Rome; Andronicus and Junias, well-known apostles, who "were in Christ" before Paul himself;[1] Amplias, Urbanus, Stachys, Apelles, Herodion; Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, three good women who laboured for the Gospel; Rufus and his mother; Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, who also, with others, formed a special group; Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and those with them; and finally two more groups, one of the household of Aristobulus, the other of the household of Narcissus. The latter is no doubt the celebrated freedman of Claudius, and Aristobulus is the grandson of Herod the Great, who was then living in Rome, on very good terms with the same emperor. The expression St Paul uses, "those of the household of Aristobulus, . . . and of Narcissus," leads to the belief that these groups were drawn from amongst the clients or household servants of these rich men.[2] Writing from Rome to the Philippians, Paul sends, amongst other greetings, one from the faithful of "Cæsar's household." Later, at the end of his second Epistle to Timothy, he gives the names of four other Roman Christians—Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia.

This Linus must be the same whose name heads the list of bishops of Rome. The legends in which the names of Pudens and Priscilla occur are of no authority. But a church of Pudens, and one of Prisca or Priscilla, existed in Rome from the 4th century onwards. The cemetery of Priscilla was the most ancient in Rome, and in it the tombs of a Pudens and a Priscilla were preserved. A Christian funereal crypt, which bears the name of Ampliatus,[3] has been discovered on the Via Ardeatina.

[1] Rom. xvi. 7. [2] Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 175.
[3] De Rossi, *Bull.* 1881, p. 57-74.

ornamented with paintings of the time of Antoninus, if not of an even earlier period.

About the time when St Paul regained his liberty, St Peter came to Rome. He had, perhaps, been there before: this is possible, but it cannot be proved. And we have no information whatever as to his apostolic work in Rome. The writings which have come down to us bearing his name, whether canonical or not, contain no information on this point.

But the mere fact of his being in Rome at all, has entailed such consequences, and given rise to such important controversies, that it is well worth while to go carefully into all the evidence.

After the middle of the 2nd century a precise and universal tradition clearly existed as to St Peter's visit to Rome. Dionysius of Corinth in Greece, Irenaeus in Gaul, Clement and Origen in Alexandria, and Tertullian in Africa, all refer to it. And in Rome itself, Caius, about 200 A.D., points out the tombs of the apostles.[1] By the 3rd century, we find the Popes building on their title of successors of St Peter, and their right to this title is nowhere denied. As soon as attention was directed to apostolic traditions, and the privileges connected with them, the Church of Rome is known to the whole of Christendom as the Church of St Peter: it was there that he died and left his chair. It is very remarkable that a position entailing consequences of such crucial importance never was questioned in any of the controversies between the East and Rome.

But the evidence goes back further than the end or even the middle of the 2nd century. In his letter to the Romans,[2] St Ignatius of Antioch alludes to their apostolic traditions, and thus shows that these traditions were already known and accepted in Asia and Syria. After adjuring the Roman Christians not to oppose his

[1] Dionysius and Caius in *Eus.* ii. 25; Clement, *ibid.* vi. 14; Origen, *ibid.* iii. 1; Irenaeus, *Haer.* iii. 1, 3 (*cf.* Eus. v. 6, 8); Tertullian, *Praescr.* 36; *Adv. Marcion.* iv. 5; *Scorp.* 15; *De Baptismo*, 4.

[2] Ignatius, *ad Rom.* 4.

martyrdom, he continues: "I do not command you, as Peter and Paul did: they were apostles, I am only a condemned criminal." These words do not amount to the assertion, "Peter came to Rome," but supposing he did come, Ignatius would not have spoken otherwise; whereas if he had not, there would have been no point in Ignatius' argument.

Besides, we must not think that the death of St Peter was shrouded in darkness and quickly forgotten by the Church. Without speaking of the allusions to it which it has been thought possible to trace in the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews, the last chapter of the fourth Gospel contains an extremely clear allusion to the way in which St Peter met his death.[1] Whoever the writer was, he lived certainly in Trajan's time, or very shortly after.

In Rome itself, naturally, memories were still more distinct. St Clement,[2] in the celebrated passage on Nero's persecution, connects the apostles Peter and Paul, with the Danaides, the Dirces, and other victims who suffered as a result of the burning of Rome. They are all represented as one group (*συνηθροίσθη*), and together they gave to the Romans, and among them, *ἐν ἡμῖν*, a notable example of courage.

There is no one, even including St Peter himself, but records his sojourn in Rome. His letter to the Christians in Asia Minor[3] finishes with a greeting which he sends them in the name of the Church of Babylon (*ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτή*), that is, the Church of Rome. (This symbolic expression is well known, if only from the Apocalypse.)

[1] St John xxi. 18, 19: "Verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst where thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He (Jesus), signifying by what death he (Peter) should glorify God."

[2] 1 Clem. 5, 6.

[3] 1 Peter v. 13. Even supposing this letter were not written by St Peter, it must be a very ancient document; and its author, in using the Apostle's name, would be very careful not to make him write from a place where it was not well known to all that he had stayed.

During the summer of 64 A.D., a terrible fire destroyed the chief part of Rome. It may have been accidental, but public opinion, with one voice, accused Nero of having kindled, or at least promoted, the conflagration. To avert suspicion, the emperor accused the Christians. A great number were arrested, summarily judged, and executed. Nero conceived the idea of turning their sufferings into a spectacle. In his gardens at the Vatican he gave night entertainments, where these unhappy victims, coated with pitch, flamed with an awful light over the games of the arena. Tacitus, who gives us these details, speaks of an immense multitude, *multitudo ingens*. His statements show clearly that no one attributed the fire to the Christians; nevertheless, the Christians had a very bad reputation; they were called "enemies of the human race"; everyone spoke of their infamies, and Nero must have been very much detested, before any one could go so far as to express pity for them, as men did.

This was the verdict of Tacitus,[1] who here displays towards the Christians the injustice and contempt which he loves to heap upon the Jews. But the facts remain, both as to the horrible scenes in the Vatican, and as to the witness borne to their faith by a multitude of both sexes, for women were not spared.[2] The Apostle Peter's execution would appear to have been among these gruesome deeds; his tomb was at the Vatican, close to the circus of Nero, and, however far back we go, the tradition as to the place of his martyrdom always points to that spot as the scene of his sufferings. We must, therefore, place it in the year 64 A.D.[3] The same cannot be said of St Paul. He also laid down his life in Rome by a martyr's death. But nothing points to his being condemned in consequence of the burning of Rome. Yet

[1] On this point, see Boissier, *Tacite*, p. 146.

[2] These were the "Danaides" and the "Dirces" of St Clement.

[3] Eusebius gives the date as 67 or 68; but there is some ambiguity, for he assigns the same date to the persecution of Nero, and that persecution, *i.e.*, the tortures described by Tacitus, certainly began in the summer of 64.

tradition, which soon forgot the crowd of martyrs of the year 64, united the two apostles, and had it that they died, not only in the same year, but on the same day.

However this may be, when the remnants of the Roman community were able to meet and to reorganise, the infant Church was consecrated by the hatred of Nero, the blood of the martyrs, and the memory of the two great apostles. Even during their lifetime, the Roman Church was much esteemed by the faithful in Christ. Paul, who never spared his Corinthian friends, and who found so much to blame in those of Galatia and Asia, had only praise for the Romans. The letter which he wrote to them, and which heads his Epistles, is a tribute to their virtues. As to Peter, the fact that they were his last direct disciples brought the Romans much prestige. Almost immediately after the scenes at the Vatican (66 A.D.), occurred the catastrophe at Jerusalem. The Christians in the Holy City only escaped the fate of their nation by dispersing. For some time the Church of Jerusalem was still spoken of, but it was no longer in Jerusalem. The name now stood only for a series of groups of Christians, scattered through all Palestine, especially to the east of the Jordan, isolated from the other Christian communities, and more and more shut in by their Semitic tongue and their uncompromising legalism. Christianity lost its primitive centre, just at the moment when the Church of Rome was ripe for the succession. The capital of the empire soon became the metropolis of all Christians.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST HERESIES

Religious investigation and speculation amongst the first Christians. The Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. New doctrines. Transcendental Judaism. St Paul's Christology. The Pastoral Epistles and the Apocalypse in relation to heresy. The Nicolaitanes and the Cerinthians. Letters of St Ignatius.

THE first Epistles of St Paul show how unfettered was the early spread of the Gospel. The missionaries went wherever the Spirit led them—now where the Gospel had not yet been preached, now where Christian communities were already in existence, though from this St Paul abstained; his rule was never to sow in another's field. He made indeed rather a long stay in Rome, but against his will. All, however, had not the same scruples, so dissensions soon arose between individuals, between authorities, and even over doctrine. The doctrine taught at first was naturally very simple; as I have tried to show, it lay implicitly in the religious education of the Israelite. But the zeal of the first Christians was too intense to remain inactive. In the intellectual sphere this fervour expressed itself in an incessant eagerness to know. The return of Christ and its date, conditions, and consequences, together with the form, duration, and almost the topography of His Kingdom, all roused the most eager curiosity, and produced the state of tension portrayed in the Epistles to the Thessalonians. When men had finished discoursing on the obligations of the Law, and the relations of ancient Israel to the infant Church, then the personality of their

Founder, in its turn, exercised their minds. Under what conditions had He existed, before His Incarnation? What was His place among celestial beings? And what had been and what was His connection with those mysterious powers, interposed by Biblical tradition, but more especially by the speculations of the Jewish schools, between our world and the infinitely perfect Being.

On these and many other points, interpretations founded on the primitive Gospel teaching and supplementing it might be legitimate. This St Paul called the "building on" (ἐποικοδομή), from which proceeds higher knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις). This advance in religious teaching he sanctions, and even promotes himself, very effectively. But he does not disguise that there is more than one way of developing primitive teaching, and that under cover of perfecting it, it is very easy to pervert it.[1]

And this was just what occurred in the communities of the province of Asia, as we see in his letters to them during his Roman captivity. I refer specially to the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. The first seems to have been a sort of circular letter, copies of which were sent to different communities. It has no local touches. The Epistle to the Colossians is different: it was evidently written specially for those to whom it was addressed. Enclosed with it was a short note, the Epistle to Philemon.

These letters transport us to the border-country between Phrygia and the ancient regions of Lydia and Caria. Three important towns, Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Colossae, lay at a short distance from each other, in the valley of the Lycus. Though Paul had not himself evangelized this part of the province of Asia, yet they looked to him as their master in spiritual things. No doubt he had sent one of his fellow-workers to them. During his captivity Epaphras, one of the chief religious leaders of those communities, visited him, and what he told him of their internal condition decided Paul to write the two letters referred to. I quote those passages which throw

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 11-16.

light on the doctrinal crisis then agitating the minds of the Christians of Asia.

Colossians i. 15-20: "He (Jesus Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him[1] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, even Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers;[2] all things were created by Him, and for Him: And he is before all things, and in Him all things consist.[3] And He is the head of the body, the Church: He is the beginning, the first-born of the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased God that in Him should all fulness[4] dwell; and God willed to reconcile all beings through the blood of His cross, by Him, I say, all that earth and heaven contains."

Colossians ii.: "I would that ye should know what terrible anxiety I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; I would comfort their hearts and knit them together in love, and endow them with all the riches of full understanding, I would lead them to the fuller knowledge[5] of the mystery of God, that is of Christ, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.[6] And this I say to you, *lest any man should beguile you from the true path with falsely enticing words.* For if I be absent in the flesh, yet, at least, am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye therefore in Him: rooted and solidly built up and stablished in the faith, as it has been taught you abounding therein with thanksgiving. *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit derived from the tradition of men, conformably to the rudiments of the world, and not to Christ.* For in Him dwelleth bodily all the fulness of the Godhead. And in Him ye enjoy this completeness, He is the head over each Principality and

[1] Ἐν αὐτῷ, a Hebraism.
[2] Θρόνοι, κυριότητες, ἀρχαί, ἐξούσιαι.
[3] Συνέστηκεν.
[4] Πλήρωμα.
[5] Ἐπίγνωσιν.
[6] Σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως.

each Power:[1] in Whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands, you have put off the body of the flesh by this circumcision of Christ: ye have been buried with Him in baptism, ye are risen with Him, through faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh; he quickened you together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; he has blotted out the ordinance of our condemnation, He took it away by nailing it to the Cross; He conquered Principalities and Powers, He showed their weakness openly by His triumph over them.

"*Let no man therefore judge you in the matter of meat, or of drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbaths:* All these are the shadow of things to come, of the future which, being present, is of Jesus Christ. *Let no man condemn your efforts,*[2] *troubling you in the worshipping of angels,* and impressing and awing you by visions, puffed up as these men are, by the vain pride of the flesh. *They do not hold fast to the Head,* to which all the body is bound, and from which it draws its life and increase according to God. With Christ ye are dead to the rudiments of the world, why then as though ye were alive and in the world, do you thus dogmatise. '*Touch not; taste not; handle not even these things of which the use contaminates, for it is unfitting.*' Which things are commandments and doctrines of men. They have, no doubt, a show of wisdom in their *method of superstition and humility of mind and of severity to the body;* but at root have nothing honourable, nothing leading to the satisfying of the flesh."

These words lead us to conclude that the adversaries whom St Paul was combating were trying to introduce: 1st, the observance of feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths; 2nd, abstinence from certain food, and practices of humiliation; 3rd, the worship of angels. Perhaps the question

[1] Ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας.

[2] Θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἃ ἑώρακεν ἐμβατεύων (al. ἃ μὴ ἑώρακεν).

of circumcision was still under discussion (ii. 11): it seems rather to be indicated in the term humiliation. Though this has all a Jewish flavour, yet the days of the controversy in the Epistle to the Galatians are over. The discussion no longer turns on the opposition between Faith and the Law, but rather on special ceremonies, corresponding with special doctrines, which they thought to establish on the apostolic foundations.

Behind these ceremonies is discernible a special line of teaching, of which the characteristic feature is the excessive importance attributed to the angels.[1] St Paul does not go into details; he rather expounds his own doctrine, than analyzes that of his adversaries. But the way he insists that everything was created by Jesus Christ, and for Him, that He holds the first place in the work of creation and in that of redemption, shows that the teachers of Colossæ had tried to detract from the position of the Saviour in the minds of the Phrygians. Later heretical systems, as we shall see, set up the angels over against God, attributing to them the creation of the world, and the responsibility for evil, both moral and physical. But here the relations between God and the angels are entirely different. The angels are not the enemies of God, for they are worshipped, and they complete the work of salvation, left unfinished by the Christ. Yet all these characteristics, these intermediaries between God and the world, these distinctions as to food, these humiliations of

[1] The Essenes attributed a particular virtue to the knowledge of the names of the angels. (Josephus, *Bell. jud.* ii. 8, 7.) They also practised various forms of abstinence. Although these practices had a local character, there were, nevertheless, Essenes outside Engaddi, scattered in the towns, and living amongst the other Jews, whilst keeping up their own observances. In the 4th century, the worship of angels reappeared in Asia, and just in the very vicinity of the Lycus. The famous sanctuary of St Michael at Chonae, near the ancient Colossæ (Bonnet, *Narratio de miraculo a Michaele Archangelo Chonis patrato;* cf. *Bull. critique*, 1890, p. 441) may date from that time. The council of Laodicea mentions (*can.* 35) religious coteries which assembled to do honour to the angels, and invoked them by name. Besides the three angels mentioned in the Bible, the Jews recognised many others, such as Uriel, Jeremiel, etc.

the flesh, these all show the connection between the Judaic gnosticism,[1] and the false doctrines St Paul opposed at Colossæ.

Now the ἐπίγνωσις, inculcated by the Apostle is of this kind. Progress in objective faith means progress in the conception of Christ. Note that the expressions used in these Epistles do not touch the relations between Christ and His heavenly Father. The expression, the Word, does not occur at all. Paul had no need for it, he was dealing only with the relation between Christ and creatures. An attempt was being made to reduce Him to the level of the angels; St Paul extols Him above every creature, and he does not only accord to Him the first place, but also makes Him the *raison d'être*, the principle of life, the end, even the Author of creation.

From this high conception of Christ, his theory of the Church is derived.[2] The Church is the aggregate of all created beings touched by the work of salvation. God has extended salvation to men of every race, Greeks, Jews, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free; and this, by a free gift. The Church, thus recruited, owes all to Jesus Christ; He is its *raison d'être*, its vital principle, its Head, its Chief. He came down from heaven to form it, by accomplishing the work of salvation upon the Cross. Since His Ascension, He still carries on, in His Church, the development and the perfecting of His work. He instituted the different degrees of ecclesiastical ministry, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, that He might fit the saints for their part in the corporate work, in that holy building which is the Body of Christ. By Christ's work, transmitted through these His instruments, we all grow in one faith, and in one knowledge

[1] It is held by some that as St Paul in this passage speaks of aeons and of Pleroma, he refers to the heresies of the Gnostics. But it is Paul himself, not his adversaries, who employs these terms, and in a different sense from that which they would have had among the Valentinians. It was the Gnostics who borrowed these words from St Paul just as they adopted St John's words Logos, Zoé, etc. (the Word and the Life).

[2] Eph. iv., *cf.* Col. iii. 11.

(ἐπίγνωσις), a faith and knowledge, having always the Son of God as their objective—and thus we attain the end of our calling, that complete manhood, which is the possession of Christ in all fulness.

Thus, in the Church, all doctrinal life comes from Jesus Christ; all progress in knowledge proceeds from Him, and leads to a more perfect apprehension of Him, and of that Pleroma, that Divine fulness, which dwells in Him. The whole Christian life comes from Him and leads to Him. Later on, St John expressed this great thought under the image of the Alpha and the Omega.

But this development of doctrine is attended with danger, due to false teaching, as ariable as the wind or the chances of a game, which arising from the frowardness of man, craftily leads into error minds not yet fully established in the true faith.[1] Paul even suggests that these systems, straying from orthodox tradition, would culminate in a justification of sensual corruption.

The course of events more than justified the fears of the Apostle. The documents available for the understanding of these first phases of heresy, certainly carry us a long way from the time when St Paul wrote to the Colossians. They are, moreover, rather polemical than descriptive. But they make it clear, that long before the famous gnostic schools of Hadrian's reign, similar teaching to theirs insinuated itself everywhere, dividing the faithful laity, perverting the Gospel, and tending to transform it into an apology for human frailty.

Such is the situation revealed in the so-called pastoral letters, two of which, addressed to Timothy, apparently refer to some crisis in the province of Asia. The preachers of heresy are no longer alluded to vaguely as in the Epistle to the Colossians; their names are given: Hymenaeus, Philetus, Alexander. They pose as teachers of the Law (νομοδιδασκαλοι); their teachings are Jewish fables; they address themselves to weak minds, full of curiosity, tormented with "itching ears," and St Paul says, especially to women, filling their minds with questions as

[1] Eph. iv. 17-24.

silly as they were subtle, with fables and endless genealogies. As to practice they inculcated abstinence from marriage, and from certain kinds of food. The resurrection was regarded as already past, *i.e.*, there is no resurrection but that from sin. And, over and above the danger to faith involved by intercourse with these false teachers, it gave rise to controversies which strained the bonds of Christian charity.

The pastoral epistles show us St Paul much grieved to find so many tares in his apostolic harvest. Other documents, which allude to heresies and to the anxiety they cause the heads of the Church, exhibit not only grief but indignation, *e.g.*, the Epistle of St Jude, the Second Epistle of St Peter, the Apocalypse of St John. Heretics are denounced as teachers of immorality, who degrade the grace of God, the Gospel, to the service of sensuality; for them Divine justice reserves the most terrible punishments. Here also we hear of cunningly devised fables; other things are condemned, but with more energy than precision.

St John also, in the seven letters with which his Apocalypse opens, shows himself much provoked. In the churches of Asia, a propaganda of immoral tendencies was raging. It allowed fornication, and meats offered in pagan sacrifice. The teaching on which this lax moral standard was grafted, is nowhere described; it is characterized, however, by a strong term: the "depths of Satan."[1] The false teachers claim to be apostles, and are not; they pretend to be Jews, and are of the synagogue of the devil. Twice[2] they are mentioned by name; they are Nicolaitanes.

From all this certainly no clear conception results of the errors prevalent in Asia at the time of the Apocalypse. Nor does tradition throw any light on them. St Irenæus only knew the heresy of the Nicolaitanes[3] from the words

[1] Rev. ii. 24. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 6, 15.

[3] Irenæus, i. 26; iii. 11. Clement, *Strom.* ii. 118; iii. 25, 26. The description of Hippolytus (Pseudo-Tert. 48; Epiph. 25, 26; Philastr. 33; *cf.* Photius, cod. 232) relates to a system of serpent-worship.

of St John; he sums them up in the words *indiscrete vivunt*. Clement of Alexandria knows no more. Nevertheless, both connect the sect of the Nicolaitanes with the deacon Nicolas, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.[1] No such connection, however, has been proved.[2]

The Nicolaitanes are not the only heretics with whom St John met. Polycarp used to tell how John, the disciple of the Lord, on entering the baths at Ephesus,[3] saw there a certain Cerinthus, and immediately left, saying, "Let us fly; the house may fall, for it shelters Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth." St Irenæus, who preserved this story of Polycarp's, gives[4] details on the doctrine of Cerinthus, and St Hippolytus[5] adds to his account. From them we learn that Cerinthus was in fact a Jewish teacher, an advocate of Sabbath observance, circumcision, and other rites. Like the Ebionites of Palestine, he taught that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary. God (ἡ ὑπὲρ τὰ ὅλα αὐθεντία) is too far above this world to concern himself with it at all, except through intermediaries. An angel created the universe; another gave the Law, and this is the God of the Jews. They are both too far below the Supreme Being to have any knowledge of Him. When Jesus was baptized a divine power, the Christ (Irenæus) or the Holy Spirit (Hippolytus) proceeding from the Supreme God, descended

[1] Acts vi. 5: he was one of the seven deacons· καὶ Νικόλαον προσήλυτον, Ἀντιοχέα: no other details are given. Clement bears witness to the immorality of the sect; but he imputes no blame to Nicolas, of whom he relates the following story: Nicolas had a wife, of whom he was inordinately jealous. The apostles having reproached him, he brought her into the assembly and offered to allow anyone to take her (γῆμαι). He had no other wife. His son was of most exemplary conduct, and he had several daughters who passed their lives in virginity. His maxim was that the flesh must be abused (παραχρῆσθαι τῇ σαρκί). Matthew said the same. They both used these words in an ascetic sense, but the schismatics twisted their meaning.

[2] Harnack, *Chronologie*, p. 536, note.

[3] Irenæus, *Haer.* iii. 3; *cf.* Eusebius iv. 14.

[4] *Haer.* i. 26.

[5] As represented in Pseudo-Tert. 48, Epiph. 28, Philastr. 36. The *Philosophumena* (vii. 33) only repeat what St Irenæus has already said.

upon Him, and dwelt within Him, but only until His Passion.[1]

About twenty years after the date of the Apocalypse, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, condemned to death as a Christian, and destined to be thrown to the wild beasts at Rome, passed rapidly through the province of Asia. In the letters which he had occasion to write to certain churches there, he also discusses the doctrinal situation, and warns the faithful against the heresies being sown in their midst.

And what strikes him above all is the tendency to split into sects and schisms. He had seen with his own eyes, at Philadelphia, heretical assemblies.[2]

"Some tried to deceive me according to the flesh, but the Spirit is not deceived, for it is of God. The Spirit knows whence it comes, and whither it goes, and reveals hidden things. I cried out in the midst of their speeches, I cried with a loud voice: 'Hold fast to the bishop, to the presbytery and to the deacons'—Some of them imagined that I spoke thus, because I knew of their separation; but He, for Whom I bear these chains, is my witness, that it was not the flesh, nor was it any man who had told me of this. It was the Holy Spirit, Who proclaims this precept: do nothing without the Bishop; keep your bodies as the temple of God; love union, flee from division; be imitators of Jesus Christ, as He is of His Father."

Those who promoted these assemblies were wandering preachers, who went from town to town sowing their tares. They were not always successful. Thus, on the road from Philadelphia to Smyrna, Ignatius met heretical preachers coming from Ephesus, where they had had no success.[3] Ignatius probably knew these heretics before coming to Asia, and wished to forewarn the churches there against an enemy, strange to them, though well known to him.

[1] According to Hippolytus, Cerinthus taught that Jesus was not yet risen from the dead, but that he would rise at the general resurrection of the just. This improbable statement of his tenets is contradicted by Irenæus.

[2] Philad. vii.

[3] Eph. ix.

The doctrine taught in these conventicles was, above all, permeated with Judaism. It was no longer, of course, simply a question of the Jewish law, but of speculations combining three elements: the Mosaic ritual, the Gospel, and visionary dreams, foreign to both. The Jewish rites, having been forbidden on their own account, and as a means of salvation, were now used to recommend and to give shape to rather peculiar religious systems. Ignatius often recurs to the Sabbath, circumcision, and other observances, which he characterises as out of date. He insists upon the authority of the New Testament and of the Prophets, whom he connects with the Gospel as indirectly opposed to the Law.

The Christology of the heretics, the only clearly defined part of their system, is a Docetic Christology: "Become deaf,[1] when anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, the descendant of David, the son of Mary, who was truly born, did eat and drink, and who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, and truly crucified; who truly died in the sight of heaven, earth, and hell, who was truly raised from the dead by the power of His Father.[2] . . . If some who are atheists—that is to say, unbelievers —pretend He suffered only in appearance, they themselves living only in appearance, why then am I bound with these chains? Why do I desire to fight with beasts? Then do I die in vain." These expressions do not apply only to the reality of the death and resurrection of the Saviour; they cover the whole of His earthly life. They are not aimed at the imperfect Docetism of Cerinthus, but at a real Docetism, like that of Saturnilas and of Marcion, according to whom Jesus Christ had only the appearance of a body.

Eschatology (*i.e.*, the doctrine of the last things) is not touched on; but the insistence with which Ignatius dwells upon the reality of Christ's resurrection, and upon the hope of individual resurrection, suggests that these heretics

[1] *Trall.* ix. x.

[2] Observe the analogy with the second article of the Apostles' Creed.

also denied the resurrection of the body.[1] This would deprive morality of its strongest motive. The words of the letter to the Philadelphians: "Keep your body as the temple of God" seem to indicate that the new doctrines led to immorality. This, however, is merely hinted at. It was not on account of their misconduct, but rather of their sectarian spirit, that the new heretics were a danger to the Church.

By what doctrine St Ignatius met this illicit preaching is but vaguely indicated in his letters. The religious dispensation of the Old Testament, though formerly sanctioned, was imperfect; it is now abolished. The martyr does not allegorise it,[2] he sees in it the preface to the Gospel. His Christology presents several remarkable features. Jesus Christ is truly man and truly God; "Our God,[3] Jesus Christ, was conceived in the womb of Mary, according to the Divine dispensation, of the seed of David, and by the Holy Spirit, he was born, he was baptized, that by the virtue of His Passion, water might be purified." His pre-existence before the Incarnation is strongly asserted: "There is only[4] one physician of flesh and of spirit, born and not born (*natus et innatus*, γεννητὸς καὶ ἀγέννητος), God manifest in the flesh, true life in death, son of Mary, and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord." Ignatius knew the doctrine of the Word: "There is only one God, who has manifested himself in Jesus Christ, His Son, who is His Word, uttered after silence,[5] and who in all things was well pleasing to Him

[1] *Cf.* Polycarp, *Philipp.* vii.: "He who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, he is an anti-christ; he who does not accept the witness of the cross, he is of the devil; he who twists the words of the Lord for his own lusts, and says there will be no resurrection and no judgment to come, he is the first-born of Satan."

[2] Like Pseudo-Barnabas, for instance. [3] *Eph.* xviii. [4] *Eph.* vii.

[5] *Magn.* viii. The old editions have it: ὅς ἐστιν αὐτοῦ λόγος ἀΐδιος, οὐκ ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθών. St Ignatius seems to be refuting Valentinianism, a system in which we find the Word described as issuing, by an intermediate agent it is true, from Sigé (silence) the companion of the Eternal Abyss. This is regarded as an argument against the authenticity of this letter and of others. Th. Zahn has proved (*PP. apost.*,

that sent Him." This coming forth in time does not prevent Jesus Christ from being above time, and outside time, and from having existed before the ages, in the Bosom of His Father.[1]

Heresy, in these remote days, always springs from a Jewish or Mosaic root. The false teachers are always teachers of the Law, advocating the Sabbath, circumcision, and other rites. But they do not teach only the Law, and are not to be confounded with the good scribes of Jerusalem, and their Pharisee disciples, absorbed in the canonical Law and its commentaries. They are real theologians, who taking advantage of the comparative indifference of their co-religionists to all but the worship of the Law, devote themselves to doctrinal speculation. And they did not stop there. To the already sufficiently minute observances of the Mosaic Law they added a very definite asceticism, celibacy, vegetarianism, and abstinence from wine. Those amongst them who accepted Christianity, combined with the new doctrines of the Gospel their "Jewish fables," and tried to impose them, together with their austere rule of life, upon new converts. They were, in fact, Judaizing gnostics, who in the primitive churches heralded the inroads of philosophic Gnosticism.

vol. ii., p. 36) that the words, ἀΐδιος οὐκ are not to be found in the best texts. They represent a correction made when the προέλευσις in time of the Word was abandoned and condemned by orthodox theologians. But this doctrine was long held, as we shall see later.

[1] Ὑπὲρ καιρὸν, ἄχρονος (*ad Polyc.* iii.); πρὸ αἰώνων παρὰ Πατρί (*Magn.* vi.).

CHAPTER VII

THE EPISCOPATE

Unity of the brethren threatened by heresy. Need of a hierarchy. Situation in Jerusalem and Antioch. Church organisation in St Paul's time. Colleges of bishops, deacons. The monarchical episcopate and its tradition. Apparent conflict between collegiate and monarchical episcopate.

THE greater number of documents quoted thus far have all been connected with the churches of the province of Asia; but nothing precludes the supposition that things were everywhere practically the same. The crisis was serious. A principle of great importance was at stake. Would Christianity remain faithful to the Gospel? Or would the simple preaching of primitive days be submerged by a torrent of strange doctrines? Was this pure religion—derived from all that was best in Israel—this healthy morality, this calm and confident piety, was it all to be at the mercy of hawkers of strange doctrines and immoral impostors? Many such men were appearing in various guises; in the guise of apostles and prophets, they hurried from church to church, appealing to Jewish tradition and evangelistic authority, and accentuating abstruse points of philosophy, calculated to puzzle simple souls.

How could they be got rid of? In these early days the Church had not yet acquired either a definite canon of scripture, or a universally recognized creed. It had not even well-established ecclesiastical authorities, confident of themselves, and supported by solid Church tradition.

The right to speak was as easy to obtain in the

Christian assemblies as in the synagogues. If an address took an undesirable turn, it was no doubt open to the presidents of the assembly to stop the speaker. But if the speaker refused to obey, and discussion ensued, how were they to deal with men who quoted the great Apostles of the East, or learned doctors of the Law, or who even claimed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

We have seen the difficulty St Paul had in regulating the inspiration of the Corinthians. And how was the spread of false doctrine outside the general assembly of the faithful to be stopped? Or the formation of religious coteries which, even apart from perverting doctrine, destroyed the brotherly unity of the first days?

There was but one way of escape; and that was to strengthen in the local community the influences making for unity and control. Thus, it is not astonishing that the most ancient documents on heresy should be also the earliest witnesses to the progress of ecclesiastical organization. The pastoral epistles lay great stress on the choice of priests or bishops, their duties and their fitness to fulfil them. This is also the all but exclusive subject of the letters of St Ignatius. The time has come, therefore, to consider more closely the first beginnings of hierarchical government in the Christian society.

We have seen that the primitive community in Jerusalem lived at first under the direction of the twelve apostles, presided over by St Peter. A council of "elders" (*presbyteri*, priests) and a college of seven deacons completed this organization. Later on, a "brother of the Lord," James, takes his place beside the apostles, sharing their superior authority. When the apostles dispersed, he took their place alone and assumed the position of head of the local church.

Upon his death (61 A.D.) a successor was appointed, also a kinsman of the Lord, Simeon, who lived till about 110 A.D. This Jerusalem hierarchy presents exactly the grades of rank which, later on, became universal.

We have less information as to the second community, that of Antioch. We see, at first, a group of apostolic, or

inspired men at its head; then darkness descends, and we must await the time of Trajan. Then we find the Church of Antioch governed in the same manner as the Church of Jerusalem. Ignatius, the bishop, was the counterpart of Simeon at Jerusalem. Sometimes[1] he calls himself bishop, not of Antioch, but of Syria, which suggests that as yet there were only two distinct churches in that region, the Church of Jerusalem for the Jewish Christians in Palestine, and that of Antioch for the Hellenist congregations of Syria. The Syrian Bishop was assisted, as was the Bishop of Jerusalem, by priests and deacons. Tradition has preserved the name of a predecessor of Ignatius, Euodius; through him, the hierarchy was carried back to apostolic days.

In his missions, St Paul could not but give his Christian communities the rudiments of ecclesiastical organisation. And this the author of the Acts describes when he represents the Apostle[2] as appointing *presbyteri* (priests) in each city. Nevertheless, these local heads are rarely mentioned in his letters. The earliest of his epistles speak rather of actions performed, than of official functions,[3] or, if functions are mentioned they appear to be rather those of the itinerant, œcumenical Apostolate, than of the local government. Thus the Epistle to the Ephesians[4] enumerates at the same time, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers; these are not all technical terms, and the three first have nothing to do with the local organisation of the Church. Moreover, in these groups of neophytes, the local dignitaries would hardly have stood much above the rest, in the eyes of the apostles. All were converts of recent date, scarcely free from paganism. The real heads of the Church were still those who had been the direct cause of their evangelization. And yet, holders of hierarchical office did exist

[1] *Rom.* ii.; cf. *Rom.* ix., *Magn.* xiv., *Trall.* xiii.

[2] Acts xiv. 23.

[3] 1 Thes. v. 12, 13, τοὺς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν Κυρίῳ καὶ νουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς: 1 Cor. xii. 28, γυβερνήσεις, ἀντιλήψεις.

[4] Eph. iv. 11, τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστὰς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους.

already. They are even designated by the terms that still remain in use. In the title of his Epistle to the Philippians, written about 63 A.D., St Paul addresses himself "to the saints in Christ which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Some years before, when on his way to Jerusalem, he had summoned the "priests" of Ephesus and commended to their care the infant Church, of which, he said, the Holy Ghost had made them "bishops."[1] Here already appears an absence of clear distinction between priests and bishops and the collegiate government of the Church. Like the Church of Philippi, the Church of Ephesus was governed by a group of persons who were both priests and bishops.

This state of things, or if we prefer it, this mode of designation, continued for a long time. In the Epistles of St Peter and St James,[2] the local church is governed by "priests" In the pastoral epistles, where the selection and duties of the heads of the Church are brought so prominently forward, they are spoken of sometimes as priests, sometimes as bishops. The letter of St Clement (about 97 A.D.) is of great importance in this connection — being written in consequence of a dispute about the ecclesiastical hierarchy: it represents the local church as governed by bishops and deacons. It is the same in the recently published *Teaching of the Apostles*. This, too, is the terminology of the letter to the Philippians, received about 115 A.D. by the Church of Philippi from Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna; he only speaks of priests and deacons.[3] Hermas[4] speaks in like manner of the Roman Church of his time; and so does the writer of the *Second Epistle of Clement*, a Roman or Corinthian document of the time of Hermas.

Acts xx. v. 28. The speech is evidently by the author of the Acts of the Apostles as to details of expression; but there can be no doubt that St Paul commended his Christians at Ephesus to the care of priests or bishops appointed by himself.

[2] 1 Peter v. 1-5; James v. 14.

[3] v., vi.

[4] *Vis.* iii. 5, 1; *Sim.* ix. 27. He uses the term bishop also, but in a general manner, without special reference to his church.

These last-mentioned writings bring us very near to the middle of the 2nd century.

There has been much discussion over these documents and over the manner in which they appear to conflict with the received tradition that the system of government by a single bishop dates from the earliest days of the Church, and embodies, in the hierarchical order, the apostolic succession. To me it seems, that if we look at the matter dispassionately and in no contentious or party spirit, we shall see that tradition is less biassed on this point than is sometimes supposed. The view that the episcopate represents the apostolic succession, is in accordance with the sum-total of facts as we know them. The first Christian communities were governed at the outset by apostles of various degrees, to whom they owed their foundation, and by other members of the evangelizing staff. But in the nature of things, this staff was ambulatory and unsettled, and the founders soon entrusted specially instructed and trustworthy neophytes with the permanent duties which were necessary to the daily life of the community: such as the celebration of the Eucharist, preaching, preparation for baptism, the presidency in assemblies, and temporal administration. Sooner or later the missionaries were obliged to leave these young communities to themselves, and the entire direction of affairs fell into the hands of the leaders who had formed part of the local community.[1] Whether they had one bishop at their head, or whether they had a college of several, the episcopate still carried on the apostolic succession. It is equally clear that, through the apostles who had instituted it, this hierarchy went back to the very beginning of the Church, and derived its authority from those to whom Jesus Christ had entrusted His work.

But we can go further still, and show that if the system of government by a single bishop represents in some

[1] It is possible, as Harnack thinks (*Texte u. U.* xv., fasc. 3), that the two short letters John ii. and iii. preserve traces of this transference of authority and of the struggle that here and there it must have given rise to.

respects a later stage of the hierarchy, it was not so unknown in primitive days as it might appear. To begin with, we could not have a better instance than that of the Mother Church at Jerusalem, which from the time when the apostles dispersed had a monarchical bishop. We have also every reason to believe that in Antioch this form of government was traditional from the commencement of the 2nd century, when St Ignatius imparted to it such distinction. In his letters, addressed to various churches in Asia, Ignatius very earnestly urges them to hold fast to their bishop, the head of the local Church, that they might be able to withstand the attacks of heresy. This testimony to the existence of the episcopacy is the very reason why his letters were so long viewed with suspicion in some quarters. But Ignatius does not speak of the monarchical bishop as a new institution; if he exhorts the faithful of Asia to rally round their bishop, he does not adopt a less pressing tone in speaking of the other grades of the hierarchy. His advice may be summed up thus: Rally round your spiritual chiefs! The fact that these chiefs form a hierarchy of three rather than of two degrees is of secondary importance to his argument, he treats that as a matter of fact, uncontested and traditional; and has no need to urge its acceptance.[1]

Towards the middle of the 2nd century, the monarchical episcopate also comes before us as an undisputed fact of received tradition, in the Western Christian communities of Rome, Lyons, Corinth, Athens, and Crete, as well as in more Eastern provinces. Nowhere is there a trace of any protest against a sudden and revolutionary change, transferring the government from a college of bishops to that of a single monarchical ruler. From the 2nd century onward—in some places at least—it was

[1] If we knew more about the "angels" of the churches in Asia, spoken of at the commencement of the Apocalypse, it might perhaps be possible to state whether by this symbolic term the bishops of these churches were meant. It would not be surprising if this were the case, for scarcely twenty years separate the Apocalypse and the letters of Ignatius. The exact meaning, however, is not certain.

possible for them to name the bishops linking them to the apostles. Hegesippus, who travelled from church to church, made in various places a collection of lists of bishops, or drew them up himself from local recollections and documents. The line of succession of the bishops of Rome dates back to St Peter and St Paul, and is known to us through St Irenæus; that of Athens, dating back to Dionysius the Areopagite, is given by St Dionysius of Corinth. In Rome, the episcopal succession was so well known, and its chronology so clear, that it served to fix the date of other events. It was said of different heresies, that they appeared under Anicetus, or Pius, or Hyginus. In the discussion as to the observance of Easter, Irenæus fixed a date in the same way, going back farther still, to Telesphorus and to Xystus I., that is to the time of Trajan and of St Ignatius.[1]

What conclusion can be drawn from all this, if not that the system of government by a monarchical bishop was already in existence, in countries west of Asia, at the time when such books were written as the *Shepherd of Hermas* or the *Second Epistle of Clement*, the *Teaching of the Apostles*, and the *First Epistle of St Clement;* and that, therefore, the testimony of these old writers to the collegiate episcopate does not preclude the existence of the

[1] The value of these dates would be rather lessened, though not destroyed, if we admitted with Harnack (*Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 158, etc.) that they were all derived from a little Roman Episcopal Chronicle of the time of Marcus Aurelius, whence St Irenæus and various other chronologists, and later writers on the heresies, drew their information. But the existence of this primitive *liber pontificalis* is far from being established by the arguments used to support it, and it would be rash to base any inference on such a hypothetical document. Even if the existence of the text which Harnack thinks he has been able to re-construct be granted, it would still be necessary to explain how, if there had been no single monarchical bishop in Rome, before Anicetus, it would have been possible to represent him, only a few years after his death, as the successor of a long line of bishops, and to get credence for the tale, not only from the local public, for whom the little chronicle was evidently intended, but also from men like Hegesippus, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Hippolytus, who had good opportunities for acquiring reliable information.

monarchical episcopate? Towards the end of the 2nd century, the author of the Muratorian Canon said of Hermas, that he wrote a short time before, under the episcopate of his brother Pius: *nuperrime, temporibus nostris, sedente cathetra* (sic) *urbis Romae ecclesiae Pio episcopo fratre eius.* Thus Hermas seems only to know of the collegiate episcopate, yet writes under a monarchical bishop, his own brother. About the time of Commodus, a Modalist teacher was cited more than once to appear before the ecclesiastical authority of Smyrna. Hippolytus, who recounts the event[1] uses the expression "the priests" (*οἱ πρεσβύτεροι*). Yet it is quite certain that Smyrna then had a bishop. Moreover, the collegiate episcopate, which was certainly the original system in more places than one, was not likely to be the final form: it had to modify itself very soon. Government cannot be carried on by commission, unless presided over by a head who has it well in hand, who inspires it, guides it, and acts in its name. Probably the members of these episcopal colleges in primitive times were rather more on an equality with their president, than are canons of our day with their bishop. According to the rather confused memories which tradition has transmitted to us, they for long retained the power of ordination, which now especially characterises the episcopal dignity. The priests of Alexandria in replacing their dead bishop, not only elected, but also consecrated his successor.[2] This custom no doubt dated from a time when Egypt had no church but that of Alexandria. It would not be surprising to find that the same circumstances had led to the same results in Antioch, Rome, and Lyons, and in fact, in every place where the local churches had a very wide jurisdiction.

We are thus able to explain the custom of designating both the president and his counsellors by a common

[1] *Adv. Noetum*, 1.

[2] See the documents collected by Dom. F. Cabrol, in his *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne*, vol. i., p. 1204. Cf. *Canones Hippolyti*, c. 10.

denomination. We ourselves speak of the clergy, the priests, of a parish, although there is considerable difference between the authority of the parish priest and that of his curates. In like manner, when they spoke of the priests of Rome, or the bishops of Corinth, the term covered both the higher grades of the hierarchy. But the natural course of events tended to concentrate the authority in the hands of one person, and this change, if change there were, was one of those which come about of themselves, insensibly, without anything like a revolution. The president of the episcopal council in Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and many other places, stood out sufficiently from his colleagues to be separately and easily remembered. The Church of God which "dwells in Rome" may have inherited the supreme authority of its apostolic founders in a diffused form; this authority concentrated itself in the priest-bishops as a body, and one of them embodied it more specially, and exercised it. Between this president, and the one monarchical bishop of succeeding centuries, there is no difference in principle.

CHAPTER VIII

CHRISTIANITY AND THE STATE

Relations with the Jewish Government in Palestine. Religion in the Greco-Roman state. Peculiar position of Judaism and Christianity. The Roman authorities first confuse Christians with Jews but afterwards distinguish them. Christianity prohibited. Legal proceedings against the Christians. The rescript of Trajan. State policy and the spread of the Gospel.

THE first temporal power with which Christianity had dealings was the Jewish Government. On the death of Herod the Great (4 B.C.) his kingdom was divided between his three sons, Philip, Herod Antipas, and Archelaus. The countries between the Jordan and the frontiers of the Nabathean kingdom fell, for the most part, to Philip's share. Antipas took the north, Galilee, Decapolis, and Perea, and Archelaus had the centre and the south, Samaria, Judea, and Idumea. Archelaus was soon deposed (6 A.D.) and replaced by a Roman procurator. Philip retained his tetrarchy, as it was called, until his death (34 A.D.); Antipas survived him, but was finally deposed (39 A.D.). Philip's principality was for some years united to the province of Syria (34-37) and then given by Caligula (37 A.D.) to Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great. He also inherited (39 A.D.) the tetrarchy of Antipas, and finally (41 A.D.) acquired the province of the procurator, including Jerusalem and the adjoining countries. Thus, the kingdom of Herod the Great was reconstructed. In the first pages of the history of Christianity all these princes are mentioned,

though, in fact, they had but little connection with the infant Church. Herod Antipas, who beheaded John Baptist, plays but a secondary part in the Passion. It does not appear that either he, or his brother Philip, interfered with such disciples of the Gospel as may have been in their respective principalities. Agrippa himself seems to have displayed no hostility until he became king of Jerusalem. There, in Jerusalem, lurked the real enemy, the Jewish priesthood, whose influence was supreme in the great national council, the Sanhedrim (*συνέδριον*), which resembled the Senate in Greek cities. This authority was, however, more or less municipal. It had no jurisdiction beyond the borders of the procurator's province. And it had but a moral or religious influence in the little Jewish kingdoms, as, of course, in countries which, like Damascus, were under other rulers. Even in its own jurisdiction it had not supreme power. Thus, in Judea the procurator alone had the *jus gladii*, and would not always use it at the pleasure of malicious priests. So capital sentences were few. After Jesus Himself, only St Stephen, James, the son of Zebedee, and James the brother of the Lord, are mentioned as suffering the extreme penalty. The priests made up for this by scourgings and imprisonments, and other measures of less severity than death.

On the death of Agrippa I. (44 A.D.) his kingdom had been restored to the procurators. But from 50 A.D. his son, Agrippa II., who was a favourite of the Emperor Claudius, obtained not only the little principality of Chalcis, in Anti-Lebanon, but also was given power of control over the temple, and the privilege of nominating the high priest. Three years later, his principality was exchanged for a kingdom beyond the Jordan, formed for him out of Philip's late tetrarchy, and part of that of Antipas. The Christians had no reason to complain of him. Indeed, during St Paul's trial before the Roman procurator, he showed himself on the whole favourable to the prisoner; and when St James, the brother of the Lord, was stoned by the order of Hanan the younger the high priest, Agrippa, in his indignation at once deposed

the pontiff. And during the insurrection the Christian community took refuge in his domain. This kindly prince lived till 100 A.D.

But the position of Palestinian Christianity is peculiar. It should therefore not detain us from a survey of the empire as a whole. Let us see what chances of external security the Church is likely to meet with there.

In the days of antiquity, it was regarded as a fundamental principle that[1] man has duties towards the Divinity, and that the citizen of any particular State has special obligations to the gods of his native land. A Roman owed an especial reverence to the gods of Rome, an Athenian to those of Athens, and so on. On the other hand, not only was he free from obligation to the gods of other lands, but he was forbidden to worship them. Religion was essentially national. It was as incongruous for a man to affiliate himself to any foreign cult as to take service in a foreign army, or to devote any fraction of his political activity to a foreign state.

This principle, however, did not forbid foreigners domiciled in the land (*metœci*, *incolae*) to practise their alien religion. As they were forbidden to join in the national worship of their temporary home they would have been cut off from all religion, if they could not practise their own peculiar rites. This local contiguity, however, involved no blending of the two religions, no weakening of the barriers which divided them, and no change in the duties of the citizens towards their respective faiths.

This distinction between religions, being dependent on the separation between states, was necessarily disturbed by their fusion. The right of Roman citizenship, when extended to the inhabitants, the citizens, of towns once independent of Rome, naturally involved the spread of the Roman religion itself. Local rites, however, could not be abolished. Neither Fortuna of Prænestе, nor Diana of Aricia could be supposed to have lost her divinity, or

[1] Mommsen, *Religionsfrevel nach römischen Recht*, in the *Historische Zeitschrift*, vol. lxiv. (1890), p. 421, and especially *Römisches Strafrecht* (1899), p. 567, etc.

her claim to worship, because the citizens of Prænestе and of Aricia had become Roman citizens, and had as such incurred obligations to Vesta, to Jupiter Capitolinus, and other gods of the sovereign city. And just as the gods of Rome became the gods of the new citizens, so also the gods of the new citizens became the gods of Rome. When this religious fusion had once become a principle of political conduct, grave consequences ensued. The annexation of southern Italy to the Roman state brought into the Roman Pantheon all the divinities of the various Greek tribes, who had ancient and illustrious colonies on Italian soil.

This *adlectio in divorum ordinem*, as it may be termed in Roman style, did not take place without certain formalities. We know the mode of procedure in the case of Apollo and Æsculapius. In many cases, they seem to have gone through a process of identification. Ares was identified with Mars, Aphrodite with Venus, and so on.

Thus the situation created by the annexations in Greece, and the colonization of the West could be met. This was so much to the good. But, both in the East and in the West, there were people whose national faiths would neither square with Greek polytheism, nor with the lines of the Latin religion.

The rulers of the empire would never have entertained the idea of depriving these far-distant subjects of theirs of their own gods; and evidently they carefully abstained from the attempt. All they did was to forbid certain customs which appeared contrary to morality, such as human sacrifices, castration, and circumcision. As to the Celtic religion, Augustus went farther and prohibited it to Roman citizens.

These exotic religions, however, cannot be said to have really blended with the religions of the empire. Isis, Astarte, and Mithras were tolerated, as were Teutates and Odin, but they never attained official recognition. The Celtic religion almost entirely disappeared, thanks to the progress of Roman civilization, or to speak more accurately, thanks to the spread of Latin or Roman law. The same may be said of the Iberian, Mauritanian, and Illyrian

religions, which were brought under the same influences. The oriental rites had a more tenacious vitality, and not only held their own in their respective homes, but also took root in far-off Greece and Italy, and even beyond.

In the beginning, their spread was not welcomed. A Greek, and still more a Roman, when attached to his own traditions, shrank from taking part in these exotic rites. At last, however, the character of the empire became so mixed that repugnance ceased. Romans of the highest rank frequented the oriental rites, not only in the East as pilgrims, but even in Rome itself, in the temples set up in the vicinity of the Capitol.

This fusion was facilitated by the utter absence of any exclusiveness on the side of the foreign religions. A devotee of Isis never dreamed that his homage might not be welcomed by Jupiter Capitolinus. In the 4th century, the offices of priest of the Roman and of the oriental religions were held simultaneously by representatives of the oldest families in Rome. A man might be a member of the college of pontiffs or that of the augurs, without being thereby prevented from undergoing the Mithraic rite of the Taurobolia, or even from taking the lead in such ceremonies.

But this did not hold good with the Jewish and the Christian religions. Both of them required a separation which was absolute, and founded on something quite distinct from any feeling of patriotism. It was an exclusiveness of principle. The God of Israel and of the Christians was not a national God, one god amongst other gods. He was the One and only God, the God of the whole world, the Creator of the universe, the Lawgiver and Judge of the whole human race. Other gods were only false gods, deified men, demons, idols. They were of no account. Every other form of worship was a sacrilege. The religions of particular cities, or nations, or of the empire, were but false religions, diabolical errors against which it was the right and the duty of every man to protest.

These gods, these different rites, included by Jew and

Christian under one common condemnation, found a bond of union in this very condemnation, and in the collective reaction excited by it. Paganism now stood face to face with monotheism; and the antagonism which it encountered gave it a certain self-conscious existence.

And not only was paganism now aware of the common foe; it was also aware of its ally the State, the common guardian. Although there were in the Pantheon degrees of standing, though the Syrian goddess, for instance, was not on an equality with Jupiter or Apollo, yet there was a certain fellowship between the various cults. If all the gods were not the gods of the home country, yet none of them were radically opposed to the central group, that of the Roman gods strengthened, under the empire, by the divinities Rome and Augustus. These two universally reverenced gods were represented, and as it were incarnated on earth in all State officials, and lent additional prestige to the other gods, and so accentuated the official side of religion. Anyone not acknowledging them was clearly outside the national religion, as far as the empire had one: such men were without a god, atheists.

As long as the Jews had a national existence, their colonies would be considered as connected with the Palestinian centre, and their national worship as a foreign rite, legal, and even binding on all of Jewish birth, wherever they might be domiciled. The successors of Alexander befriended these Jewish colonies. They not only tolerated, but protected and encouraged them. At the time of the Roman conquest, the Jews could show the pro-consuls charters, in which their existence was recognised, and various privileges specially accorded them, as to Sabbath observance, oaths, and military service. The Romans recognised all this. And even in places where such charters were non-existent, particularly in Rome, they adhered to the generally accepted procedure as to alien rites, and left the Jews unmolested. Yet, if it happened, and it frequently did happen, that Jews were Roman citizens, then complications arose. In the 1st century of our era, many undoubted Jews attained

positions of high dignity in the empire; but under Tiberius, a far greater number were pressed into the unhealthy army of Sardinia, or turned out of Italy.[1] They, or their parents, had once been slaves, whose emancipation had made them Roman citizens. Another case in point was that of the proselytes to Judaism. As long as it was only a question of accepting monotheism, and the Jewish moral code, and even of certain observances (such as that of the Sabbath, and of abstaining from swine's flesh), little difficulty arose, especially of course in the case of unimportant folk, and of those outside the city of Rome. But in the case of a proselyte of the upper classes, or of an aristocratic family, if the conversion were so thorough as to involve circumcision, or any other rite implying complete incorporation into the Jewish community, the convert was considered to have thereby renounced his allegiance to the city of Rome ; he was an apostate, a traitor.

Thus real proselytes appear to have been very rare, even before Hadrian prohibited circumcision, or Severus enacted his edict against conversions to Judaism.

In theory, the destruction of the sanctuary at Jerusalem ought to have entailed the suppression, or prohibition, of Jewish rites. But in practice it did not. Vespasian, as a man of the world, clearly discerned that more was involved than nationality, and that Judaism would survive the Jewish State and even the Temple. He contented himself with diverting to Jupiter Capitolinus the tribute of the didrachma, formerly paid by the children of Israel to Jahvé and his sanctuary. The Jews, thus involuntarily transformed into clients of the great Roman god, had no reason to complain of him, or the State under his ægis. They retained the liberty and even the privileges they had enjoyed. Thus, Judaism continued to be an authorised

[1] Tacitus, *Ann.* ii., 85 : "Actum et de sacris Aegyptiis Iudaicisque pellendis, factumque Patrum consultum ut quattuor milia *libertini generis* ea superstitione infecta quis idonea aetas in insulam Sardiniam veherentur coercendis illic latrociniis, et si ob gravitatem caeli interissent, vile damnum ; ceteri cederent Italia nisi certam ante diem profanos ritus exuissent."

religion (*religio licita*). Christianity, on the other hand, became a proscribed religion (*religio illicita*), as soon as the Romans grasped the characteristics which differentiated it from Judaism.

This did not occur immediately. The Roman governors, being practical men, did not care to be drawn into sectarian squabbles. As they had not given the subject any close attention, they had at first some difficulty in distinguishing Christians from Jews, and in understanding why the Christians were so unpopular with the Jews. The perplexities which beset Pilate again beset Gallio, the pro-consul of Achaia, when Paul fell out with the Jews of Corinth, and also the procurators Felix and Festus, when the Jewish high-priest prosecuted St Paul before them. And before this even, the authorities in Rome, observing that the Jews were perpetually quarrelling over a certain Chrestus, settled the matter by expelling both parties.

This ambiguity could not continue. The Jews were not likely to permit an abhorred sect to profit by their privileges, nor to allow themselves to be compromised by the imprudence of Christian evangelists. They were not long in opening the eyes of the authorities. From the time of Trajan it was forbidden to profess Christianity. Pliny,[1] appointed governor of Bithynia, 112 A.D., had never, until he assumed that office, taken any part in proceedings against Christians (*cognitiones de christianis*); but he knew that they did occur, and involved heavy penalties. There must, however, have been a definite moment when the supreme authority in such matters decided that to be a Christian was a penal offence. At what time did this occur? It is very difficult to ascertain. Before Trajan, two persecutions are generally supposed to have taken place, that of Nero, and that of Domitian. But the details related of these persecutions—the martyrdom of Roman Christians falsely charged with the conflagration in 64 A.D., and the death of a certain number of men of high rank, whom Domitian put out of the way as atheists—are peculiar occurrences easily accounted for quite apart from

[1] Pliny, *Ep.* x. 96.

any official prohibition of Christianity, and may have taken place before the existence of any proscriptive law. They do not therefore throw much light on the question.

St Peter in his epistle thus adjures the faithful:—"Let none of you suffer (πασχέτω) as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or a busy-body in other men's matters (ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος). Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."[1] The apostle here speaks of punishments which would be inflicted by the authorities appointed to suppress theft, murder, etc., that is by the ordinary courts of justice. It seems improbable that these words would be written before the courts had been specially empowered to take action against Christians, as such. If the date of this epistle could but be fixed with accuracy and certainty, it would help considerably to clear up the point.

The supreme authorities of the empire had at this time, however, several opportunities of informing themselves on the position of the Christian communities with regard to Judaism, and to the laws then in force. It is unlikely that the trial of St Paul, for instance, would have failed to direct their attention to such points. The same may be said of the burning of Rome, and the consequent persecution of those "commonly called Christians."

We are told, though indeed, on rather late authority, that[2] Titus had grasped the difference between the two religions, and that when he decided to burn the Temple at Jerusalem, he hoped to exterminate both parties. Domitian set himself to augment the amount brought in by the didrachma. He required its payment, not only by Jews registered as such, but also by those who at-

[1] 1 Peter iv. 15, 16.

[2] That of a passage of Sulpicius Severus, *Chron.* ii. 30, which is believed to have been copied from the lost part of Tacitus' histories. At the council of war which took place on the eve of the Fall of Jerusalem, Titus advised the destruction of the Temple "quo plenius Iudaeorum et Christianorum religio tolleretur; quippe has religiones, licet contrarias sibi, isdem tamen ab auctoribus profectas; Christianos ex Iudaeis extitisse; radice sublata stirpem facile perituram." According to Josephus, however, Titus entertained quite other views.

tempted to conceal their origin, and by any living according to Jewish custom, even though they were not Jews by birth, and did not enroll their names. This decision was very rigidly enforced and necessarily entailed a close investigation into the inter-relationship of the Jewish and Christian creeds. And beside these instances which we know, we may be sure others would arise which would claim the attention of the law-givers, and induce them to take a decided line.

When once the religion was proscribed, a private individual might institute proceedings against a Christian by denouncing him before the proper tribunal; or else by pointing him out to the authorities, and setting to work the magistrates, in Rome the prefect, in the provinces the governor and his subordinates. The crime being a capital offence, it was almost always[1] before the governors that the case finally came; they, at any rate, invariably figure in the stories of the martyrs.

Many, beside Tertullian, have tried to determine what was the exact crime committed by professing Christianity. It is, I think, a mere question of terms. The judicial terminology of the Romans had no equivalent for apostasy from the national religion. The expression *crimen laesae Romanae religionis*, which occurs once in Tertullian, gives us the right idea, but then it was not a term in general use. The *crimen laesae maiestatis* (high treason) was, on the contrary, well defined by the law. At the time under consideration, and in the conditions existing when the difficulty arose, there was little difference between the two. An accuser, who wished to take proceedings in proper form, might perhaps have brought an action against a Christian on a charge of high treason. Whether such a case ever actually occurred I know not.[2]

[1] Some towns had preserved their complete criminal jurisdiction. Their magistrates no doubt condemned many martyrs; but we have no information on this point.

[2] The only case known that may be an instance of the use of this form of procedure, is that mentioned by Justin in his second *Apology*, chap. ii. A Roman woman was accused of Christianity by her husband. He "laid an accusation against her, saying that she was a Christian";

As a matter of fact, Christians were denounced, hunted out, judged, and condemned, simply as Christians. Public opinion might charge them with horrors of all sorts, but they were never condemned for magic, or infanticide, or incest, or sacrilege, or high treason. Tertullian, who like all the apologists writes at length on these calumnies and their absurdity, expressly declares that such crimes never came in as a cause for the sentences passed on Christians: "Your sentences are aimed at nothing but the avowal of Christianity; no crime is even mentioned; the only crime is the name of Christian."[1] He quotes the formula of these sentences: "Finally, what is it that you read from your tablets? *Such a one, a Christian.* Why do you not add: *and a murderer?*[2]

Pliny did not know, he said, whether the Christian was prosecuted as such, or for the crimes which the name implied—*nomen ipsum si flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini.* Trajan's reply makes no direct reference to the perplexity; but it indicates clearly that it was the name alone which was proscribed, and this also is the upshot of all the documents, apologies, stories of martyrdoms, etc. Moreover, two features in the imperial reply go to show that the crime of Christianity was not like other crimes. The magistrate, says the emperor, must not seek out Christians, but must restrict himself to punishing them (evidently with the death penalty), if they are denounced and condemned: *Conquirendi non sunt; si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt.* Also, if they abjure Christianity, and prove their sincerity by sacrificing to the gods, their repentance must secure pardon: *ita tamen ut qui negaverit se christianum esse idque re ipsa*

κατηγορίαν πεποίηται λέγων αὐτὴν χριστιανὴν εἶναι. Was this really an accusation before a criminal *quaestio*, or simply a denunciation to the police?

[1] Sententiae vestrae nihil nisi christianum confessum notant; nullum criminis nomen extat, nisi nominis crimen est; haec etenim est revera ratio totius odii adversus nos" (*Ad nationes*, i. 3).

[2] "Denique quid de tabella recitatis? Illum christianum. Cur non et homicidam:" (*Apol.* 2). The judge was obliged to *read* the sentence; hence the mention of tablets.

manifestum fecerit, id est supplicando diis nostris, quamvis suspectus in praeteritum veniam ex paenitentia impetret. If the Christians had been what calumny accused them of being, why should their crimes not have been tried and punished? It is not the duty of criminal courts to pronounce on the frame of mind of the culprit when under trial, but on the reality of the misdeeds he is accused of. The advice not to seek out Christians is just as singular: *conquirendi non sunt.* If they were guilty and dangerous persons, the authorities were in duty bound to hunt them out.

This rescript of Trajan gives valuable evidence of the false position in which the government found itself, in face of the spread of Christianity. According to its principles and traditions, as we have seen, its duty was to stop this progress. Nero and Domitian were bad emperors; to them personally and to the worst points in their character are due the cruelties which the Christians, with many others, suffered under their regime. And Christian polemical writers are right in pointing out these monsters as heading the procession of persecutors. But it is nevertheless true that the suppression of Christian propaganda, which appears to have been determined on in the imperial councils of that time, was inspired both by traditional principles and by necessities of State.[1]

It is still, however, an open question whether the State did not over-shoot the mark in awarding the death penalty for the mere avowal of Christianity. Such laws are easy to make; but how are they to be applied? Pliny is dismayed at the vast number of persons implicated; there were Christians of all ages and of all ranks in the towns, in the villages, and in the country. The temples were deserted, the feasts fallen into disuse, and the sacrifices so neglected, that the vendors of sacrificial beasts had lost their customers. And the innocence of the Christians was even more appalling than their number. The governor had

[1] The repression of heresy by the State, so long universally acknowledged as a necessity, grew out of the same principles as the persecutions of early Christianity by the Roman Empire.

verified this himself, by various methods, including of course torture, to which he had subjected two deaconesses. Their meetings, their common meals, were in all respects blameless; their mutual pledges were with no criminal intent, but on the contrary they swore never to be guilty of theft, highway robbery, or of adultery, nor to break a promise made on oath, and so on.

It was impossible in these circumstances for a sagacious emperor to avoid being perplexed. He could not execute the whole population of Italy and the provinces, nor could he persecute people, to whose virtues even the government officials bore witness. And so the law was but slackly administered, inquiries were not pushed home, and apostates were pardoned.

After Trajan, other emperors showed themselves fully as much inclined to restrain the execution of the law. Hadrian wrote to this effect, to several provincial governors, and notably a letter, which has come down to us, to the pro-consul of Asia, C. Minucius Fundanus.[1] The apologist, Melito,[2] cited this letter to Marcus Aurelius, as well as others to the towns of Larissa, Thessalonica, and Athens, and one to the assembly (κοινόν) of Achaia,[3] from Antoninus.

All these documents, as far as we know them, betray a predisposition, not indeed to good-will but to moderation. We must not suppose, however, that in consequence the Christians enjoyed an enviable tranquillity. Their writings show that under these good emperors they were accustomed to the prospect of martyrdom; several definite

[1] Eus. iv. 9. Eusebius found this letter, in Latin, at the end of Justin's first apology. He translated it into Greek. This is the text we now have, in the manuscripts of Justin. It has been erroneously assumed, that Rufinus, instead of re-translating this document into Latin, took the original text from the manuscript of Justin. It is very unlikely an author like Rufinus would have done this.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 26.

[3] The rescripts on the Christians, by Antoninus Pius to the assembly of Asia, and by Marcus Aurelius to the Roman senate (the affair of the Thundering Legion) are apocryphal. They are generally printed with the apologies of St Justin. The first took in Eusebius, who reproduced it (under the name of Marcus Aurelius), *H. E.* iv. 13.

and well-attested facts accord with this view. The martyrs whose names and histories have come down to us by some lucky chance, do not appear to be in any way exceptional men. The fact is, it was not solely a matter between the government and the Christians. Local feeling had to be reckoned with, and fanatical riots, and pressure might be brought to bear on municipal magistrates, and even on provincial governors. The good sense of the emperor restrained these influences now and again. But he did not always interfere, and even when he did, it was not without regard to what was still the law, that law which always had been and still was supported by State policy. In fact, if the 2nd century emperors held back from extermination, yet they were far from ensuring any security to the Christians. That they refrained from the severe measures of a Decius and a Diocletian was doubtless due to their contemptuously indifferent attitude towards these sectarian and doctrinal squabbles, or because they relied implicitly on the resisting power of other sects, or of the philosophical spirit. In the 3rd century, the inadequacy of these bulwarks was proved, and the danger from Christianity was more apparent. Then the government acted with more vigour, though only spasmodically and intermittently. It was too late: the Church escaped, and it was the Empire that fell.

CHAPTER IX

THE END OF JUDAIC-CHRISTIANITY

Death of James, "the brother of the Lord." Insurrection of 66 A.D. The Church's migration from Jerusalem. Revolt of Bar-Kocheba: Aelia Capitolina. Judaic-Christian bishops. The Gospel according to the Hebrews. Connection with other Christians. Hegesippus. Ebionites. Elkesaites.

WHILST St Paul's case was being tried in Rome before the imperial tribunal, the Judaic-Christian Church at Jerusalem was passing through a serious crisis. Festus the procurator had just died, and it was some time before his successor Albinus could reach Palestine. This led to an interval of confusion and anarchy. The high-priest at the time was Hanan II., the son of the Hanan (Annas) of the Passion, and a relative of the Ananias mentioned in the story of St Paul.[1] Like them, he detested the "Nazarenes." Eagerly seizing his opportunity, he attacked their local head, James, the "brother of the Lord," a man who seems to have been universally revered in Jerusalem, by Jews as well as Christians. His austerities and his protracted prayers in the Temple were long renowned. The people named him the Just, the bulwark of the people (Obliam). But this did not save him from the malice of the high-priests. Hanan assembled the Sanhedrim and summoned James, with several others, to appear before it, and obtained a sentence of death against them. James and his companions were stoned near the Temple.

[1] Acts xxiii., xxiv.

Here he was buried, and a hundred years later his monument was still shown.[1]

Hanan paid dearly for his audacity. The procurator on his arrival from Alexandria was appealed to, and also King Agrippa II., who at once deposed the high-priest.

This was 62 A.D. Four years later, under the procurator Gessius Florus, who succeeded Albinus, the long smouldering revolution broke out at Jerusalem. In the autumn of 66 A.D. the Roman garrison was massacred, and insurrection spread rapidly throughout Judæa and the neighbouring countries. Cestius Gallus, the legate of Syria, made an ineffectual attempt to re-take the holy city. In the following year, Vespasian being sent by Nero to repress the revolt, restored Galilee to subjection. But the death of the emperor (68 A.D.) and the troubles which ensued, arrested the process. Jerusalem was a prey to factions, and went through a reign of terror. The high-priest Ananias and all the leaders of the sacerdotal aristocracy were massacred by the rioters; fanatics and brigands contended for the Temple and the fortresses. On all sides anarchy, incendiary fires, and massacre prevailed. The Holy City had become the antechamber of hell.

The Christian leaders received a heaven-sent warning,[2] and the community decided to leave the town. They took refuge at Pella, in Decapolis, in the kingdom of Agrippa II. Pella was a Hellenic and a pagan town; but they made the best of it. Long afterwards Julius Africanus (c. 230) reported the existence of other Judaic-Christian communities[3] at Kokhaba beyond the Jordan, and also at Nazareth in Galilee. In the 4th century, there was another at Berea (Aleppo) in north Syria.[4] The exact time that they migrated, and whether from Jerusalem or from Pella, is unknown.[5]

[1] See Josephus' and Hegesippus' accounts of these events in Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 23. *Cf.* Josephus, *Ant.* xx. 9, 1.

[2] Κατά τινα χρησμὸν τοῖς αὐτόθι δοχίμοις δι ἀποχαλύψεως ἐχδοθέντα. Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 5. [3] *Ibid.* i. 7, 14. [4] Epiph., *Haer.* xxix. 7.

[5] The *Didascalia of the Apostles*, a 3rd century composition of uncertain date, seems to emanate from surroundings still affected by Jewish and Judaic-Christian influences. *Cf.* Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. ii., p. 495.

This dispersion continued after the war. A return to Jerusalem was out of the question; it had been so completely razed to the ground, that it was difficult to believe it had ever been inhabited, and for sixty years the camp of the tenth legion (*leg. X Fretensis*) was the only sign of life. The Emperor Hadrian decided to found a new city on the spot, a pagan city of course, with a temple within the precincts of the ancient sanctuary. This profanation, similar to that of Antiochus Epiphanes, was too much for the scattered remnant of Israel. Simon-bar-Kocheba headed an insurrection, supported by the celebrated Rabbi Akiba, and gave himself out to be the long-expected Messiah of the Jews. The Roman legion was driven from its camp; and for some time the Jews held the ruins of their holy city. But Jerusalem was no longer of any military importance; and the headquarters of the insurgents was at Bether. Near there they were finally crushed, but only after three years of a sanguinary struggle (132 to 135) which ruined and depopulated Palestine.

The Judaic-Christians could not accept Bar-Kocheba as the Messiah of Israel; they refused to join the revolt. This, as may be imagined, brought misfortune upon them, for the insurgents hunted them down remorselessly,[1] till the Roman victory gave them peace, and they resumed their obscure existence. Hadrian's plans were carried out. On the ruins of Jerusalem arose the colony of Ælia Capitolina, with its theatres and pagan sanctuaries. Jupiter's Capitol and the emperor's statue profaned the Temple Hill. The Christian holy places did not escape; a temple of Venus was set up on Calvary. Any Jew found in the new city was doomed to death. The Judaic-Christians could but keep away; and they did so. The supreme authority in the Judaic-Christian world appears to have long remained in the hands of the kinsfolk of the Saviour: James was the "brother of the Lord"; Simeon, who succeeded him as head of the Church of Jerusalem, and who lived till the time of Trajan, was also a kinsman of Christ's. Two sons of another "brother of the Lord"

[1] Justin, *Apol.* i. 31.

called Judas, were denounced to the authorities in Domitian's time; they were sent to Rome, and examined by the emperor himself. He convinced himself that such feeble folk could not be dangerous, and that the Kingdom of Heaven was no menace to the Roman Empire. The two sons of David were sent back home to "preside over the churches."[1] Bishop Simeon did not escape so well. Hegesippus reports that he suffered martyrdom under Trajan, Atticus being then (c. 107) governor of Palestine.[2] In the days of Julius Africanus, well into the 3rd century, there still survived some of these *Desposyni* (kinsmen of the Lord), highly esteemed[3] amongst the Judaic-Christians. A list of the ancient bishops of Jerusalem has been preserved by Eusebius,[4] who says that the line of succession continued until the Jewish revolt under Hadrian (132 A.D.). The first two are James and Simeon, who bring us down to 107 A.D.; the remaining thirteen bishops have therefore to be got into twenty-five years. This is a large number, but if we accept the list, and the time-limits given by Eusebius, the natural explanation is that the list includes the bishops, not only of Pella but of other colonies from the primitive Church of Jerusalem.

A more interesting relic of these early Christian days would be the Gospel they used, if only we had it in a more complete form. It was of course in Hebrew, or rather was an Aramaic Gospel, translated at a comparatively early date into Greek, when it received the title of Gospel according to the Hebrews, *κατὰ Ἑβραίους*. St Jerome[5] often alludes to it; the Semitic text, which he knew, he sometimes identifies with the original Hebrew of St Matthew.[6] This suggests that the canonical Gospel of St Matthew

[1] Hegesippus, quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 20.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 32. The date, 107 A.D., is that of his *Chronicle*. [3] Eusebius, *H. E.* i. 7. [4] *H. E.* iv. 5.

[5] St Epiphanius (*Haer.* xxix. 9) knew of its existence, but refers to it as though he had not seen it.

[6] St Epiphanius does so also. From the time of Papias, a Hebrew version of Matthew is referred to which no one had seen, but which was, not unnaturally, identified with some such Gospel as that of the Nazarenes.

bore a marked resemblance to the Gospel of "the Hebrews." Judging by the fragments preserved, however, the differences between them were rather important. This Gospel of the Hebrews appears to have been quite as ancient as our Synoptics, and quite independent of them: it was probably compiled in the community of Pella.[1]

From Pella came also Aristo, the author of the dialogue of Papiscus and Jason, a propagandist work now lost. It represents a disputation between a Jew and a Judaic-Christian, culminating in the conversion of the Jew. Eusebius derived some information on Bar-Kocheba's revolt from this dialogue which appeared soon after that event.[2]

The Church of Pella, even with its colonies in Palestine and Syria, cannot be taken as representing the whole of Judaic-Christianity. To some extent everywhere, but more especially in great centres like Alexandria, there were Jewish converts to Christianity among the Jews of the Dispersion, who did not consider themselves absolved from the observance of the Law. They became Christians under shelter of the great doctrinal toleration[3] which prevailed in Judaism, but they did not cease to be Jews. Their relations with the other Christians, whose existence they certainly acknowledged, must have been much the same as those which, to the great vexation of Paul, had been authorised by Peter and Barnabas in Antioch. Justin[4] knew Christians of this type; he thinks they will be saved, if they do not force Christians of a different origin to adopt their mode of life. He acknowledges, however, that

[1] Zahn, *Kanonsgeschichte*, vol. ii., p. 642 *et seq.*; Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 631 *et seq.*; *cf.* Hilgenfeld, *N. T. extra canonem*, fasc. iv., p. 15; and Handmann's contribution to the *Texte und Unters.*, 1888.

[2] *H. E.* iv. 6. The comments on Aristo of Pella are to be found in Harnack, *Altchr. Litteratur*, vol. i., p. 92.

[3] We can form some idea of the extent of this toleration, when we consider that it was permissible to side either with Philo, or with Akiba, to believe either in the resurrection of the dead, or in absolute annihilation, to look forward to the Messianic hope or to scoff at it, to philosophize like Ecclesiastes, or like the Wisdom of Solomon, etc

[4] *Dial.* 47.

his is not the universal opinion, and that some would not admit the Judaic-Christians to communion.

Justin speaks only of individuals: he says nothing of Judaic-Christian communities, nor of their relations with the representatives of the main body of the Church. Hegesippus, at the close of the 2nd century, goes rather more into detail. He describes the "Church," that is "the Church of Jerusalem," as being, at first, faithful to tradition, but afterwards riddled with heresies. The first of these originated with a certain Thebuthis, who was disappointed at not being elected bishop. According to Hegesippus, these heresies were connected with the different Jewish sects, Essenes, Galileans, Hemerobaptists, Masbotheans, Samaritans, Sadducees, and Pharisees. This list includes rather heterogeneous elements, but broadly speaking the idea is correct, and is confirmed by facts. Like the Judaism from which it sprang, the Judaic-Christian Church attached an exaggerated importance to the ordinances of the Law, and was not sufficiently on its guard against doctrinal speculations.

Hegesippus was himself a Judaic-Christian. That was the impression of Eusebius, who had read all he wrote; and it is confirmed by his use of the Gospel of the Hebrews, by his language, which is full of Hebrew words, and by his familiarity with the history of the Church of Jerusalem.

He evidently regarded that Church as orthodox and worthy of all respect. But nevertheless he did not feel out of his element in the Corinthian or Roman communities. He investigated their episcopal succession, and the way they preserved primitive traditions. According to him, all their customs were in accordance with what the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord had taught.

But the optimist views of Justin and Hegesippus did not affect orthodox tradition. Later, with St Irenæus and Origen[1] an unfavourable opinion of the Judaic-

[1] Irenæus, *Adv. haer.* i. 26; iii. 11, 15, 21; iv. 33; v. 1; Origen, *Adv. Celsum* ii. 1; v. 61, 65; *In Matt.* xvi. 12; Tertullian, *Praescr.* 33; Hippolytus (represented by *Praescr.* 48, and Philastr. 37); the *Philosophumena* vii. 34, are based on Irenæus, and add nothing of interest.

Christians prevailed. These authors regard Judaic-Christianity as but a sect, the sect of the Ebionites or Ebioneans, Ἐβιωναῖοι. This term, which later was derived from the name of an imaginary founder, Ebion, really signified poor. From the beginning, the Judaic-Christians of Syria had been called Nazarenes.[1] This name appears in the Acts;[2] it was evidently derived from that of the Lord, "Jesus of Nazareth." Possibly they called themselves so, or others called them *Ebionim*, without intending any disparagement. Does not the Gospel say: "Blessed are the poor!"[3] Later, the controversalists of the main body of the Church, proud of their transcendent Christology, connected the notion of poverty of doctrine with the name and used it as a nickname. Origen recognized, though it seems to have escaped St Irenæus' notice, that in their case it was not a question of any real heresy, such as those of Cerinthus or Carpocrates, but merely of a late survival of an undeveloped primitive Judaic-Christianity. In St Irenæus' description the Ebionites are characterized by their fidelity to the Mosaic ordinances,[4] circumcision, and the rest; they hold Jerusalem in great veneration, and turn towards it to pray; and their belief that the world was created by God Himself distinguishes them from all the gnostic sects. Above all they cling to the Law; the Prophets they treat with much subtle explanation.[5] So much for their Judaism. As to their Christianity, it was observed that they had but one Gospel, St Matthew,[6] that they rejected the epistles of St

[1] This is the term employed by St Epiphanius, notably in the chapter (xxix.) of his *Panarium* devoted to this sect. The name *Ebioneans* is used by him to denote a particular heretical system of which we shall hear more. St Jerome generally employs the term Nazarenes to denote the Judaic-Christians, but evidently he regards Ebionites and Nazarenes as the same.

[2] Acts xxiv. 5. [3] St Luke vi. 20; St Matt. v. 3.

[4] In the account in the *Philosophumena*, it is said that Jesus received that name, and the name "The Christ of God," on account of his fidelity to the Law.

[5] "Quae autem sunt prophetica, curiosius exponere nituntur."

[6] A confusion with the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Paul, whom they regarded as an apostate, and that they considered the Saviour as the son of Joseph. On this point, however, opinions differed. Origen says the miraculous birth was accepted by some, but rejected by others.

Thus, being shut up in the Law, the Judaic-Christians were led insensibly to separate themselves from the main body of the Church. And in spite of the sympathetic attitude of some individuals, this separation was already apparent by the close of the 2nd century.

It had even led to controversy. Towards the end of the 2nd century, a certain Symmachus, an Ebionite, known by his Greek version of the Old Testament, wrote to defend the position taken up by his co-religionists against other Christians.[1] There were Ebionites scattered almost everywhere in the great Jewish colonies. In Trajan's time the Greek version of their Gospel was already known in Egypt; and the name given to it, "Gospel according to the Hebrews," was doubtless intended to distinguish it from another Gospel accepted there, "the Gospel according to the Egyptians," used in the Christian community of Alexandria.

Still further off, amongst the peoples of southern Arabia—where Judaism had already made, and continued to make, many converts—the preaching of the Gospel had taken the Judaic-Christian form. Pantaenus, who visited them about the time of Marcus Aurelius, found the Hebrew Gospel[2] in use, and was told that the Apostle Bartholomew, the

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 16, 17, where we learn that Origen had these books from a lady named Juliana (of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, *cf.* Palladius, *H. Laus.* 147), who had received them as a legacy from Symmachus himself. Various Latin authors of the 4th and 5th centuries knew the Symmachians as a sect of Judaic-Christians. (Victorinus rhet., *In Gal.* i. 19; ii. 26; Philastrius, *Haer.* 62; Ambrosiast., *In Gal.*, prologue; Saint Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, xix. 4, 17; *Contra Cresconium*, i. 31). In the time of St Augustine, this sect counted but a very small number of adherents. St Epiphanius, *De mens. et pond.* 18, 19, tells us that Symmachus was a Samaritan convert to Judaism. But he alone mentions the fact. *Cf.* Harnack, *Chronologie*, ii., 164; *H. E.* v. 10.

[2] Eusebius, who tells us this, identifies, as was customary, this Hebrew Gospel with the original Gospel of St Matthew.

first missionary to these distant lands, had brought it to them.

Nevertheless, the Judaic Church remained small, even when those of the dispersion were included. Doubtless it suffered, under Trajan and Hadrian, from the calamities which befell the Jewish nation. In the time of Origen, it was of comparatively small account. The great commentator rejects[1] the notion that by the 144,000 elect of Israel, in the Apocalypse, the Judaic-Christians could be meant; the number appears to him far too high. Origen wrote after two centuries of Christianity, so his estimate would cover five or six generations. He cannot have thought the Judaic-Christians very numerous.

In the 4th century there were still Nazarenes. They are referred to by Eusebius, St Epiphanius, above all by St Jerome, chiefly in connection with their Gospel. The allusions to their doctrine are not in very favourable terms.[2] Now and then traces of the influence of the main Church can be discerned amongst them, and even of some attempt at a drawing together. A fusion no doubt did take place, but only on the part of individuals. None of the Judaic-Christian communities were received as such into the oriental patriarchates. Thus Judaic-Christianity died out in misery and in obscurity. As the Church developed in the Greco-Roman world she left her cradle behind. Emancipation from Judaic-Christianity was as necessary as from pure Judaism. St Paul, on his last journey to Jerusalem, suffered both from the brutality of the Jews and the malevolence of the Judaic-Christians;

[1] In John i. 1.

[2] "Quid dicam de Hebionitis qui christianos se simulant? Usque hodie per totas Orientis synagogas inter Judaeos haeresis est quae dicitur Minaeorum et a Pharisaeis nunc usque damnatur, quos vulgo Nazaraeos nuncupant, qui credunt in Christum filium Dei natum de Virgine Maria et eum dicunt esse qui sub Pontio Pilato passus est et resurrexit, in quem et nos credimus. Sed dum volunt et Judaei esse et Christiani, nec Judaei sunt nec Christiani." St Jerome, *Ep. ad August.* 89. St Epiphanius has no hesitation in classing them with heretics (*Haer.* xxix.).

he found a refuge and comparative safety amongst the Romans. This is symbolic of the whole situation.

But St Paul had not only had to deal with legalist Jews. He also encountered a subtilized form of Judaism which had added peculiar rites and ascetic practices to the Mosaic ordinances, whilst it supplemented the simple faith of Israel with high-flown religious and philosophic speculations. The Essenes in Palestine, and Philo, and others of his type, among the Dispersion, represent different aspects of this tendency to develop received tradition. The same tendency affected the primitive Christian communities. The teachers whom St Paul opposed in his Asiatic letters were connected with this sublimated form of Judaism—as were also those with whom St Ignatius had dealings later on. It finds its special expression in the doctrines of Cerinthus. In the 2nd century, it appears that this movement had abated a little; at any rate it is not discernible amidst the din of the Gnostic sects. A hundred years after Cerinthus and St Ignatius, there was a revival of this type of Judaic-Christian preaching.[1] In the time of Pope Callistus (217-222 A.D.) a certain Alcibiades, coming from Apamea, in Syria, represented the movement in Rome. He brought with him a mysterious book, said to have been given in the mythical land of Seres to a good man named Elkesai, about the third year of Trajan's reign (100 A.D.).[2] Elkesai had received it from an angel thirty leagues high, called the Son of God; beside whom was a female being of the same dimensions, called the Holy Spirit.[3] This

[1] *Philosoph.* ix. 13; *cf.* Origen (Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 38) and Epiphanius, *Haer.* xxx.

[2] It is not impossible that such a book existed, and it may even have been written in Trajan's time. Its foundation was a preaching of repentance; and there seems no reason why the Elkesaites of Alcibiades, if they had fabricated the whole thing, should have taken so much trouble to produce what was simply a call to repentance. In matters of that kind, the proclamation is quickly followed by the effect. We have but to remember the preaching of Hermas, which was almost contemporary with that of Elkesai. *Cf.* Harnack, *Chronologie*, ii., p. 167, 537.

[3] The word Spirit, in Semitic languages, is feminine.

revelation was nothing but a preaching of repentance, or rather of purification by baptism, incessantly renewed. The initiate immersed himself in the water, invoking the seven witnesses, that is, Heaven, Water, the Holy Spirits, and the Angels of Prayer, Oil, Salt, and Earth. This ceremony not only purified from sin, but cured madness and other diseases. The prescribed formulas were composed of Syriac words, said backwards.

This sect does not appear to have met with much success outside the country of its origin, where it had more than one form no doubt, for St Epiphanius knew several varieties of it, described as Ossenes, Ebionites, and Sampsaeans. In his day it was confined to the countries lying east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. Two women still remained of the family of Elkesai, Marthus and Marthana, whom their co-religionists held in great veneration.

These sectarians observed the Jewish rites, but had views of their own on the Scripture canon. They repudiated the Prophets and eliminated from the Law all reference to sacrifice. They scouted the Apostle Paul and rejected his letters. Their New Testament opened with a Gospel, of which St Epiphanius has preserved fragments. The text claimed to have been compiled by St Matthew,[1] in the name of the twelve Apostles. There were also stories about the apostles, contained in special books, such as the *Preaching of Peter*, from which the Clementines[2] were

[1] We must not confuse this rather late production with the Gospel of the Hebrews, mentioned later, nor more particularly with the very ancient collection of *Logia* mentioned by Papias, and apparently one of the sources of our own canonical Gospel of St Matthew. Fabricators of apocryphal documents have specially exploited the name of this apostle. Clement of Alexandria (*Paedag.* ii. 1) describes St Matthew as a professed vegetarian. Whence he derived this notion I know not, but it would be specially likely to attract the Elkesaites.

[2] Recent researches on the Clementines (Waitz, *Die Pseudoklementinen*, in the *Texte und Unt.*, vol. xxv., fasc. 4; *cf.* Harnack, *Chronologie*, ii., p. 518 *et seq.*) show that the genealogy of these documents was as follows. First came a book called the *Preaching of Peter*, composed at the end of the 2nd, or the beginning of the 3rd

derived, and the "Ascensions of James," quoted by St Epiphanius. The teaching of all these writings is strongly ascetic, especially as to vegetarian food and an abhorrence of wine. Even in the Eucharist, water replaced wine. Their Christology resembled that of the Ebionites and Cerinthus: Jesus, the Son of Joseph and Mary,[1] became Divine at his baptism, by union with the æon Christ. This æon was by some identified with the Holy Spirit, by others with Adam, or with one of the higher angels, created before all other creatures, who had previously been incarnate in Adam, and in other Old Testament personages. On the connection of this Christ with the angel called the Son of God they do not enlighten us.

These doctrines and practices were not really anything new. They were but a revival of the old "Jewish fables" of St Paul's day, tricked out as a fresh revelation, and bolstered up by new writings specially composed for the purpose.

century; the preface was formed of the letter of Peter to James, with the protest thereto annexed (Migne, *P. G.*, vol. ii., p. 25). It was Judaic-Christian, and anti-Pauline, its ideas analogous with those of Alcibiades. About the same time, a Catholic, anti-Gnostic book recounted St Peter's discussions with Simon Magus taken as representing all heresies. These two books were combined, fairly early in the 3rd century, in an orthodox romance, in which Clement of Rome appeared in person (Περίοδοι Πέτρου); a letter of his to St James (*ibid.*, p. 32) formed the preface. From this Clementine romance were derived separately the two redactions known as the *Recognitions* and *Homilies;* of the *Homilies* we have the Greek text; of the *Recognitions*, a Latin version, the work of Rufinus, and an imperfect Syriac version. These two writings are orthodox, though only from the standpoint of the older controversies, for the spirit of the Lucianist or Arian school pervades many passages.

[1] Some, however, like the Ebionites admitted the miraculous birth.

CHAPTER X

THE CHRISTIAN BOOKS

St Paul's Epistles. The Gospels. The disciples who migrated to Asia: Philip, Aristion, John. John the Apostle in tradition. Writings of St John. Oral tradition and the Synoptic Gospels. Other canonical books. Miscellaneous writings, the Didache, Epistle of Barnabas, books attributed to St Peter. Clement, Hermas, and other "Apostolic Fathers."

BETWEEN the time when the record of the Acts ends and the middle of the 2nd century, there are too few documents on the history of Christianity, and those few too difficult of classification, or even of interpretation, to provide a basis for a consecutive narrative. The leading features have already been indicated, viz., the growing success of Christian evangelization; the way it absorbed the results of Jewish proselytism; the accentuation of the universalist side of the new teaching; the mutual divergence of the Jewish and Christian communities; the dawn of rash speculations foreshadowing the heresies of the future, and the opposition to them of Church tradition under the shelter of the local hierarchy, which everywhere was strengthened and defined in its prerogatives; and the external dangers to which the absence of all legal status exposed the primitive Church.

These, the principal features of the situation, grew quite naturally out of the conditions in which Christianity spread and took root. We must now discuss another matter of universal import and of the very first consequence, namely, the appearance of a Christian literature.

We have already dealt with the letters of St Paul, which,

as a whole, are the most ancient of the Christian documents. St Paul's epistles all fall within the years 53 and 62 A.D. except the Pastoral letters, which, at least in their present state, are of a rather later date. Although addressed to widely dispersed groups of Christians, yet they were collected very early, and both Clement and Polycarp appear to have had access to them in their collected form.

The history of the Gospels is far more complex: and also far more obscure. I will endeavour to sum up what little is known about it.

The first disciples, as we have seen, did not all continue to live at Jerusalem. Long before the siege, many had dispersed, either on account of local persecutions, or in response to the claims of the work of evangelization. The apostles were all gone; together with many other important people like Silas, who followed St Paul, on his second mission. The war in Judaea would hasten this exodus, and transport to distant lands many of the witnesses of early events. Those who left Palestine would naturally be those whose ideas were the broadest, people who were not afraid to live far from home, amidst the heathen. Some went to Asia. Amongst them was Philip the Evangelist, one of the Seven of Jerusalem. On his last journey (58 A.D.) St Paul had found him settled at Cæsarea, and had enjoyed his hospitality. Philip had then four daughters, virgin-prophetesses.[1] This family afterwards migrated into Phrygia, to the city of Hierapolis, famous, as its name indicates, for its pagan sanctuaries. Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis in the first half of the 2nd century, knew these prophetesses, and collected their sayings.[2] Towards the end of the 2nd century Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, records that two of them had died as virgins at an advanced age, and were buried with their father at Hierapolis; another was laid to rest at Ephesus.[3]

[1] Acts xxi. 8, 9.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 39.

[3] Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* iii. vi. 53; *cf.* Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 30) says that the *Apostle* Philip had daughters, and that they married. It is possible that he refers to Philip the Evangelist, in which case the marriages mentioned by Clement must be reduced to two.

From his words it is evident that Philip of Hierapolis, in the province of Asia, had already become confused with the apostle of that name, one of the Twelve. This confusion took root and spread. Tradition has preserved not only the memory of Philip and his daughters, but also the names of a certain Aristion, to whom a recently discovered manuscript attributes the final (deutero-canonical)[1] verses of the Gospel of St Mark, and of John surnamed by way of distinction "the Elder," πρεσβύτερος. Both of these had been disciples of the Lord. They lived to so great an age, that Papias was able during their lifetime to record several of their sayings.

Above all these indistinct memories hovers the image of John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee, to whom tradition attributes the Apocalypse, the fourth Gospel, and three of the Catholic Epistles. The question whether he really was the author of all of them, is much debated at present; it has even been questioned whether he ever lived in Asia. We must now examine the chief data connected with these problems, though without attempting to discuss them in detail.

Without doubt the Apocalypse is the work of a prophet John, who there lays claim to considerable authority in the churches of Asia and Phrygia. His book was written in the little isle of Patmos, where the author was in banishment for the Faith. He refers to himself in various ways, but never assumes the title of Apostle. On the contrary, the manner in which he speaks of the "twelve Apostles of the Lamb,"[2] would give the impression that he was not one of that revered company. Nevertheless, St Justin, the earliest writer to discuss the Apocalypse, attributes it,[3] without hesitation, to John the Apostle. Later writers do so also, save a few who appear to be animated by doctrinal prejudice, rather than by the consciousness of a counter tradition. St Justin made a long stay at Ephesus, *c.* 135 A.D., forty years or so after the date usually assigned to the Apocalypse.

[1] St Mark xvi. 9-20.
[2] Rev. xxi. 14.
[3] *Dial.* 81.

If the tradition, of which St Justin is the most ancient exponent, is accepted, there can be no doubt that St John was in Asia; but it would still remain to be proved whether he wrote the Gospel, and this few critics in the present stage of the discussion seem disposed to admit.

But it is not the silence of the Apocalypse alone which is set against the tradition. There is also the silence of Papias, who speaks of St John as of any other apostle, without seeming to be aware that he had any special connection with the province of Asia. And finally, there is the still more significant silence of St Ignatius. St Ignatius not only does not say one word about St John in his letters to the churches of Asia, but when he wishes to accentuate the apostolic traditions of the Ephesian Church, he alludes expressly and exclusively to St Paul. Polycarp, in his letter to the Philippians, is equally silent.

In Rome the apostolic tradition is based on very different evidence. We have the first Epistle of Peter, and the letter of Clement, both 1st century documents. Ignatius, to whom it does not occur to remind the Christians of Ephesus of the Apostle John, recalls their special connection with Peter and Paul most vividly to the memory of those in Rome.

Yet, setting aside the Apocalypse, I do not see any reason to make too much of the silence of Ignatius and Polycarp. It may be surprising that their letters say nothing of the Apostle John. But do they say more of the Apocalypse and its author? Now, the author of the Apocalypse, whether we regard him as the son of Zebedee or not, was certainly a religious authority of the highest importance in the churches of Asia. One would have expected that, in the exhortations addressed to the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, and other towns in Asia, so soon after St John's death, St Ignatius would make some allusion to his personality, his visions, and his letters. Nevertheless he says nothing about them.

And this is not all. In the middle of the 4th century

when the fact that John the Apostle had lived in Asia was universally acknowledged,—the biographer of St Polycarp recounts the early history of the churches in Asia, from St Paul to St Polycarp, and describes at length the consecration of that famous Bishop of Smyrna, and yet he does not say one word about the Apostle John. And this, in a book, the hero of which had been long represented by St Irenæus and by Eusebius, as a disciple of the son of Zebedee. Is not this silence also rather surprising? Yet would it lead one to conclude that in the 4th century, the Smyrnaeans had not yet heard that St John had been in Asia?

The silence of Ignatius, or of Polycarp, does not therefore prove much. Nor is the silence of Papias more conclusive,[1] for we have only a few phrases of his, and no one can say that his ideas on the authorship of the Apocalypse differed from those of his contemporary, Justin.

There still remains the silence of the Apocalypse to account for. But is it really justifiable, in dealing with a book of so unusual a character as the Apocalypse, to attach much weight to the fact that its author assumed, or did not assume, certain special characteristics? He does not here set out to speak as an apostle, nor as a witness to the story, or good news, of the Gospel, but as the mouthpiece of the glorified Saviour, who still lives in heaven, and thence guides His faithful flock, and reminds them of His speedy return. Why should he, we may ask, assume a character having no connection with the ministerial task which he discharged in declaring his visions?

It appears, then, that amongst all the many possible explanations of the silence of these different witnesses, there are some which do not run counter to an early and well-attested tradition. That being once established, the

[1] George the Monk (Hamartolos) in the first edition of his chronicle, in the reign of Nerva, had noted that Papias said in the second book of his *Logia*, the Apostle John was put to death by the Jews (*cf.* Mark x. 39). This passage was omitted by George in the definitive edition of his chronicle; see Boor's edition, *coll. Teubner*, vol. ii., p. 447.

wise course is to continue to accept that tradition as authentic, though without disguising that it is not amongst the traditions which have most evidence to back them.

Those who abandon the tradition are driven to regard "John the Elder" of Papias as the author of the Apocalypse. It is not unnatural to think he is the author of the two little Epistles of St John, for he alludes to himself only as an "elder," and indeed as "the elder" *par excellence* (ὁ πρεσβύτερος), a description which tallies exactly with that of Papias.

As to the Gospel and the first Epistle of St John, which are very closely allied, there is no internal evidence of any connection with the province of Asia. If St John had never set foot in Asia, he might still have written them. I do not, however, wish to go into the questions this point has raised. It is enough to repeat, that traces of the Gospel can be discerned as far back as the writings of Justin, Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius, and that Papias and Polycarp also knew St John's first epistle. We may take it, therefore, that Apocalypse, Gospel, and epistles were all known in Asia, from the first years of the 2nd century. These early witnesses, however, are all silent as to their authorship. The voice of tradition first speaks on this subject through Tatian and St Irenæus. But from that time it is quite clear and very decided.

This does not mean that there was no counter-tradition. The authenticity of the Gospel of St John, like that of the Apocalypse, had to be defended[1] against criticisms, and by arguments, which both remain substantially unaltered in the present day. Discussion will doubtless continue over its lack of resemblance to the other Gospels, and as to the likelihood that an intimate companion of Christ's

[1] The opposition of the "Alogi," at the beginning of the Montanist movement, must be pointed out. It is curious that these opponents of the new prophecy, who were in line with the orthodox church in other matters, should have disputed the authenticity of the Johannine books. To some people, at least, the origin of these books cannot have been so clear, as was that of the epistles of St Paul. For the "Alogi," see below chapter xv.

would thus represent his master, or would attribute to Him this or that discourse, and over the improbability of the philosophical development implied in the assumption that a Palestinian fisherman could be cognizant of Philo's doctrine of the Logos.

But the Logos doctrine is found also in the Apocalypse, that is in a book as far as possible from having an Alexandrian turn. The development about which people hesitate with regard to the Apostle John, they cannot avoid accepting, if they attribute the Apocalypse to John the Elder, whose circumstances were identical. As to what is possible, or impossible, in the history of the Gospels it is well to remember that the synoptics also contain discrepancies not always easy to explain. It is, besides, not easy to lay down, *a priori*, rules for such unique conditions. Certainly, in those early days, the same importance was not attached, as at present, to exactitude as to facts and to precision of detail. We have no right to expect the biblical writers to conform to our modern standards as well as to their own.[1]

But setting aside this controversy—and even granting some points as yet unproved—one important fact remains, viz., that John, a "disciple of the Lord" from Palestine, did live long in Asia, and that the churches there regarded his authority as paramount. His guidance, and even his rebukes [2] were welcomed, and he was revered on account of his great age, his virtues, and his association with the first days. He lived so long, that men began to

[1] Other gospels were drawn up for the Christians of those remote days besides the canonical gospels, and obtained recognition at least in some circles. In endeavouring to gauge the standards of those days we are quite entitled to refer to them. The author of the Gospel of Peter takes for granted the existence of our four canonical gospels. Yet it is incredible how little care he takes to adjust his gospel with those of his predecessors. The legend of Judas (see below, p. 105), though irreconcilable with the canonical gospels, was none the less accepted by Papias. I shall deal later on with the relations of the apocryphal Acts of St Paul to the Acts of the Apostles.

[2] Not, however, without isolated cases of opposition, as the third epistle shows.

say he would not die. And though he died, a vivid memory of him lived. Those who had known him prided themselves on the honour, and loved to repeat his sayings. St Irenæus speaks of the *presbyteri* who, according to Papias, had lived with John, the disciple of the Lord; he treasured their sayings, with signal respect. One of them was Polycarp, whom the Bishop of Lyons had known in his childhood. The tomb of John at Ephesus was known and honoured. Around such a memory, legend of course soon embroidered. Polycrates, the Bishop of Ephesus, at the end of the 2nd century described John as a priest, bearing on his brow the plate of gold, which shows that he regarded him as a Jewish high-priest. Clement at Alexandria preserved a beautiful tale of how the old apostle went out to seek a prodigal youth; whilst Tertullian already knows that in Rome he was plunged into a cauldron of boiling oil. His life, his miracles, and his death, or rather, his mysterious trance, were related in one of the oldest apostolical romances.[1]

These early teachers of Asia, whose sayings Papias and Irenæus treasured, were the last links with oral tradition. It is clear that oral tradition was what men lived by at the outset, when the New Testament had not yet taken shape, and when the Gospels in particular were either not written, or were not widely known. Such a position was not without its danger, for tradition becomes easily debased, when not fixed by writing. The deposit entrusted only to the living memory is liable to be affected by men's imagina-

[1] I should be loth to admit that these Asiatic memories, whatever be the authority on which they rest, should be divided between *two* Johns, a disciple and an apostle, who both lived in Asia. Papias certainly clearly distinguishes two Johns, but does not connect them both with his native land. The John of Asia is either an apostle, or else a mere disciple: we must take our choice. If the traditional belief is abandoned, then it must be admitted that John the disciple was confused with the son of Zebedee, just as Philip the deacon was confused with Philip the apostle. The story of the two tombs, mentioned as a common report by Dionysius of Alexandria (Eusebius vii. 25) is not confirmed by the tradition of the tombs at Ephesus; at Ephesus, but *one* sanctuary and *one* John were known.

tion, and also by the force of their eloquence. According to tales current in the days of Papias, the Lord lived to a great age (*aetas senior*),[1] and Judas, instead of hanging himself, as the Gospel records, lived to see his body attain such proportions that he could not even pass along streets where carriages passed easily, and his eyes disappeared from sight between his eyelids, . . . and, when finally he died, the place he lived in had to be abandoned, owing to the offensiveness of the remains, which still poisoned the locality[2] at the time the tale was told. The Apocalypse foretold that the saints would reign a thousand years, before the general resurrection. This statement was very considerably enlarged. In the kingdom of the millennium it was said vines would be seen, each bearing ten thousand branches, and each branch ten thousand twigs, and each twig ten thousand bunches, and each bunch ten thousand grapes; and each grape yielding twenty-five measures of wine. As regards corn, the harvest would be on the same scale.[3] And these predictions were given as statements made by Christ Himself. Judas, secretly an unbeliever before he became a traitor, presumed to object, and asked how God could produce such luxuriance. "They who shall enter into the Kingdom will know, replied the Lord."

It was indeed high time to limit belief to authorized written Gospels. As to the compilation and first appearance of these venerable books, and the welcome which they at first received, we have but very imperfect information. Beyond the broad fact, that the Gospels were given to the Church by the apostles or their immediate disciples, the results of the best informed, the most acute, and even the boldest criticism, are so vague and conjectural that

[1] Irenæus ii. 22, 5. Cf. *Patres Apost.*, ed. Gebhart and Harnack, fasc. 2, p. 112. Founded perhaps on John viii. 57.

[2] From a fragment collected by Apollinarius (of Hierapolis?) *P. P. App.*, I, c., p. 94.

[3] Irenæus, v. 33, 3; *P. P. App.*, I, c., p. 87. All this explains the contempt which the Greek doctors of the 3rd and 4th centuries entertained for the millennium. In Papias' day such predictions were current coin; men were accustomed to them in the apocryphal books of Enoch and Baruch, and also in the Talmud.

they can command but a cautious and qualified assent. The most ancient external evidence we can command on this particular point is a discourse of John the Elder's reported by Papias,[1] on the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. "Mark, the interpreter of Peter, wrote all that he remembered of the words and deeds of Christ carefully but not in order. He had not himself heard the Lord, nor been of His company; he was a follower of Peter. Peter framed his narrative according to the needs of his teaching, without intending to follow the order of the Lord's discourses. Therefore it is no reproach to Mark that he wrote as he remembered. He had but one care: to omit nothing he had heard, and to relate nothing but the truth." And drawing apparently on the same source, Papias says: "Matthew transcribed in Hebrew the Logia (words[2] of the Lord); each interpreted them as best he could." It is regrettable that we should know nothing of what John the Elder said on the third Gospel. His apologetic estimate of Mark appears to imply that someone had criticised this Gospel. John disposes of the criticism, but he seems to feel nevertheless that Mark does not represent perfection, and that a narrative from the pen of one who had not merely heard the apostle's account, but who could speak as an eye-witness, and whose record was complete and more exact as to sequence, might have advantages over the second Gospel. His ideal was hardly fulfilled by St Matthew, for with him the sequence was practically that of St Mark, and its Greek text did not appear to him to have reached its final form. Luke is excluded, as he was no more a direct disciple than was Mark. There remains but John. Have we not here an indirect testimony to the fourth Gospel?

This all falls into line with a notion which emerges two or three generations later, viz., that the fourth Evangelist, whilst more or less endorsing the work of the three others, endeavoured to complete it by a statement written from a different point of view.

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 39.

[2] Evidently framed in a narrative setting.

To go back behind the words of John the Elder, is to enter the realm of speculation.

No Christian evangelization is conceivable without some presentment of the life of the Founder. From the first days, the apostles must have told of their Master, recalling His memory to those who had known Him, and making Him known to those who had never seen Him From this necessarily varying oral Gospel, must have early originated transcripts, varying and incomplete likewise, which, by a process of combination and of transmission through various intermediaries, at last took shape in the three Gospels which we call Synoptic, and also in some others not accepted by the Church, but of very early date. I refer especially to the Gospel of the Hebrews, and the Gospel of the Egyptians. The first, written in Aramaic, was accepted by the Judaic-Christian Church in Palestine, then being translated into Greek (*καθ' Ἑβραίους*) it spread amongst the daughter churches, especially in Egypt Here, it came in contact with another text, adopted by the non-Judaizing Christians, the Gospel of the Egyptians (*κατ' Αἰγυπτίους*). Such, at least, are the most probable theories which have been put forward as to the origin and history of these versions.

It is possible that our Synoptic Gospels may, at the outset, have been used locally like those of the Hebrews and Egyptians, but the names they bore would ensure them acceptance everywhere. Luke and Mark may have first been read in Rome or in Corinth, Matthew elsewhere; but they all soon penetrated far beyond the place of their origin. We have seen that they were early known in Asia, where the fourth Gospel appears to have been written. Once set side by side, the Gospels could not but invite comparison. Written with only relative attention to correctness of detail and precision of chronology, and coloured by pre-conceptions which were not always identical, they presented many variations which could not fail to arrest attention. Consequently various attempts were made to complete or correct them, by each other, or even to blend their narratives into a kind

of harmony. Fragments of these combinations are imbedded in manuscripts still extant, and in quotations from ancient authors: some of them date back to very remote antiquity. Others impress us by their genuine appearance, though they lack the same authentication. Here, however, we dare not be too precise. It is wisest not to peer too far into the darkness, where we strain our eyes without any appreciable result.

Moreover, in the history of the growth of Christianity it is not what might be called the prehistoric period of the Gospels that matters most, but their influence upon the religious life of the Church.

There are other books claiming to be by the apostles themselves, or other important people, which originated in the same early days as the Gospels, or in the next generation, and were held in very high esteem. Several take the form of letters: all are books of instruction, or of religious exhortation. Perhaps some of them were originally homilies, delivered to a Christian assembly. They were read during the services of the Church, after or with the Holy Scriptures. When first an effort was made to compile a Christian Bible, a New Testament, several such writings found place in it. Thus the Epistle to the Hebrews, which at first was anonymous, and subsequently was attributed either to Barnabas or to St Paul, came to be appended to the Pauline books. Another group was that of the Catholic Epistles, so called because they were addressed to the entire Church; the number of epistles contained in this group remained undetermined a long time, and varied in different places. Seven of them finally retained their position. They are the three Epistles of St John alluded to already, the two Epistles of St Peter, the Epistle of St Jude, and finally, the Epistle of St James.

But besides these writings, which the Church recognized as divinely inspired, and judged worthy of a place amongst the canonical Scriptures, there are others which bear witness to the attitude of our spiritual ancestors. In their minds the prestige of the apostles grew ever greater as their

number diminished, and they finally all passed away. They alone seem to be entitled to speak to the Church. Even after death, they continue to instruct and edify. A very early little book, not later, at any rate, than Trajan, was called the Teaching (Διδαχή) of the Apostles, and supposed to be written by them. It contains, in concise form, precepts of general morality, instructions on the organization of communities, and the celebration of the liturgy. This is the venerable prototype of all the later collections of Constitutions, or apostolic Canons, with which ecclesiastical law in the East and in the West began. There was long in circulation an originally anonymous instruction, later attributed to Barnabas, which on its moral side is closely allied to the "Teaching." The "Teaching" and this Epistle of Barnabas both seem to be drawn from, or based on, an earlier document, in which the rules of morality were set forth by a description of the Two Ways, the Way of Good and the Way of Evil. But the pseudo-Barnabas does not confine himself exclusively to moral teaching; he has a doctrine, or rather, a controversy of his own, anti-Judaism. In its service he goes much too far. According to him, the Old Testament was solely intended for Christians and was never meant for the Israelites, who, deceived by Satan, never understood it. This extraordinary statement is proved from Scripture by a most distorted allegorical interpretation.

Various other writings are attributed to St Peter, in addition to his two canonical epistles; the Preaching (Κήρυγμα) of Peter, the Apocalypse of Peter, the Gospel of Peter. Of these only some fragments have been preserved. The first of these books is the oldest. What remains gives the impression of a Christian instruction of an ordinary type, unbiassed by prejudice on one side or the other; a few characteristic features confirm what we already know as to the great antiquity of the document. The Apocalypse (of Peter), making the most of what we are told about the descent of Christ into hell, describes, for the benefit of the living, the punishment reserved for the wicked in another world. The Gospel (of Peter) is

evidently of later date than the four canonical Gospels though still very early (*c.* 110 to 130). It presents some very marked peculiarities. In the circles from which it emanated, the Gospel story was beginning to disintegrate under the influence of Docetism. The traditional outlines were followed more or less, but filled in with tales coloured or debased by imagination, or even by theological prejudice.

The books above described were all regarded, in some churches at least, as sacred books; they were all read publicly in Christian assemblies.

So also was the epistle from the Church of Rome to that of Corinth, drawn up by Bishop Clement (*c.* 97 A.D.). Another document, not a letter, but a homily delivered no-one knows where (in Rome, Corinth, or may be elsewhere), was appended to this epistle, and so shared the prestige which the latter derived from the name of Clement. He was thus credited with two epistles. Clement was considered, not without reason, as a disciple of the apostles, an apostolic man. The prestige of the apostles extended to him. Another Roman work, the Shepherd of Hermas, was also read publicly in many churches. This claimed distinctly to be inspired. Even the romance on St Paul (*Acta Pauli*), composed towards the end of the 2nd century, was included, here and there, among the sacred books.

But other writings as ancient, or even more ancient than those last, did not attain the same position. I refer specially to the seven Epistles of St Ignatius, and the Epistle of St Polycarp, which were of Trajan's time and both by men held in high veneration. As much may be said of the lost book of Papias of Hierapolis, "Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord."

These books, whatever was their circulation and authority, have this in common, that they were all written for the Church, and that the Church recognised in them the inspiration from which she herself proceeds. They are all esoteric books, spiritual books, fitted to strengthen faith, and to keep alive Christian devotion. It is not surprising, therefore, as they were all of the same character,

that men were not concerned at first to lay down those exact lines of demarcation, which later on led to the formation of the various canons of the New Testament, and eventually of the canon now received, throughout Christendom. Very early, before the end of the 1st century, the Church possessed a certain number of books of its own, not inherited from the Synagogue, setting forth its special traditions, its principal claims and its fundamental assumptions, and disclosing the essential lines of its doctrinal development, and of its institutions. This fact is of the highest importance; and whatever view we take of controverted details, it is a fact beyond dispute.

CHAPTER XI

GNOSTICISM AND MARCIONISM

The first heresies, and Jewish speculative thought. Hostility towards the God of Israel. Simon Magus and his imitators. Saturninus of Antioch. Syrian Gnosticism. The Gnostic schools of Alexandria. Valentinus, Basilides, Carpocrates. The essence of Gnosticism. Gnostic Exegesis. The Demiurge and the Old Testament. The Gospel and tradition. Gnostic confraternities. Propaganda in Rome. Marcion. His principles, his teaching, his churches. Opposed by orthodox Christianity. Heretical literature. Orthodox Polemics.

HERESY, we have seen, is as old as the Gospel itself. The field of the householder was hardly sown before tares showed themselves among the wheat. And so the early Christian leaders were tormented with anxiety, perpetually betrayed in the Epistles of St Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, the Apocalypse, the Epistles of St Peter, of St Jude, and of St Ignatius. The teaching they had to guard against, so far as these documents disclose it, may be summed up as follows :—

1st. Neither Nature nor Law,[1] whether Mosaic or natural, emanates from God the Father, the Supreme and True God, but they are the work of inferior spirits.

2nd. This Supreme God manifests Himself in Jesus Christ.

3rd. The true Christian can and must free himself

[1] It is strange that no one has attempted to draw a distinction between nature and morality, and to trace them to two distinct principles. That is of course the result of biblical education. Given the Bible, there is no possibility of separating the Creator from the Lawgiver.

from the influence of the creative and ruling powers, if he would draw near to God the Father.

These doctrines must not be regarded as simple perversions of apostolic teaching. They contain indeed Christian elements. But exclude from them the position assigned to Jesus Christ and His work, and the rest is complete in itself, and is easily accounted for by the evolution of Jewish thought, stimulated by Greek philosophic speculation This is clear if we recall the characteristics of Philo's doctrine.[1] God, Infinite Being, is not only far above all imperfection, but also above all perfection, and even beyond definition. Matter stands apart from the Supreme Being and does not emanate from Him, and he acts upon it by manifold Powers; the chief of these is the Word. These Powers, and the Word Himself, are represented now as being immanent in God, now as distinct hypostases; they correspond to the "ideas" of Plato, or the "efficient causes" of the Stoic, or again to the angels of the Bible and the demons (*δαίμονες*) of the Greeks. They shaped the world out of already existing material elements. Some of these powers are imprisoned in human forms,[2] and it is from the incompatibility of their divine nature with the tangible body in which they are enveloped, that the moral conflict between duty and desire arises. The aim of moral life is to defeat the influence of body on mind. Asceticism is the best means to this end, but knowledge and well-regulated activity avail also, with the help of God. Thus the soul draws nearer God; in the next life, it will attain to Him, and even here it may, in ecstasy, attain to momentary union with Him.

Thus God stands apart from the world, and has no connection with it except through intermediaries emanating from Himself; in humanity, divine elements subsist, imprisoned, as it were in matter, from which they struggle to get free.

[1] See Schürer's clear and succinct account, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, ii., p. 867.

[2] Animated bodies; Philo was a trichotomist.

This is the basis of Gnosticism. If now we add to it the personality of Jesus and His redemptive work, ever drawing back to God the Divine elements which have strayed here below, we shall have the very doctrines controverted by the earliest Christian writers. Another step, however, must be taken before true Gnosticism is reached: the antagonism postulated between God and matter must be transferred to the Divine entity; the creator must be represented as being the more or less avowed enemy of the Supreme God, and—in the scheme of salvation—as the enemy of redemption.

This involves a complete break with the religious traditions of Israel. Neither Philo with his great respect for his own religion, nor the teachers of the Law, whose "Jewish fables" the apostles opposed, could have entertained the thought of including the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob amongst the spirits of evil.

1. *Simon and popular Gnosticism*

But it is quite possible to imagine conditions where men's knowledge of the Bible was sufficient to provide a basis for theological speculation, but not such as to hamper them with scruples about the treatment of the God of Jerusalem. These conditions are not imaginary; they actually existed in the Samaritan world. And when the Fathers of the Church unravel the history of the heresies, it is precisely Samaria that they all agree to be their common starting point, and Simon of Gitta,[1] surnamed Magus, whom they indicate as their author. This, of course, must be accepted with reservations. Neither Ebion, nor Cerinthus, can be considered as spiritual descendants of Simon.

It was then in Samaria, the ancient rival of Jerusalem, that Gnosticism proper first appeared in Christian history. Simon was already preaching his special doctrines in this his native land when Philip[2] brought the Gospel there. "He used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria,

[1] Gitta was a village in the country of Samaria.

[2] Acts viii. 9, 10 *et seq.*

giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying: This man is the Power of God, the great Power." His attitude was like a Samaritan reproduction of that of Jesus, in Galilee and Judea. According to the account in the Acts, Simon embraced Christianity as preached by Philip, and then by the apostles Peter and John, and was baptized. Astounded by the effects of inspiration upon the neophytes, he did his utmost—by offers of money—to induce the apostles to confer on him the power of working such miracles. His expectations were not fulfilled. Nevertheless, in Samaria, where he was upon his own ground, it was given him to prevail against the Holy Spirit. St Justin, who was a native of the same country, relates[1] that in his time almost all Samaria honoured Simon as a god, as the Supreme God, high over all the other powers.[2] And they adored not only Simon himself, but also his Thought (Ἔννοια) incarnate like himself, in a woman named Helen. St Irenæus gives more details of Simon's doctrine: "There is," he says, "a Supreme Power, *sublimissima Virtus*, and a corresponding feminine power. This Thought (ἔννοια) proceeded from her father, and produced the angels, who, in their turn, created the world. But as the angels were unwilling to appear to be what they were, that is creatures of Ennoia, they detained her, and put insults on her, and even confined her in a human body, and for ages she passed on into other female bodies. She was that Helen, the wife of Menelaus; ultimately she became a prostitute at Tyre. The Supreme Power manifested himself to the Jews as Son, in the person of Jesus; in Samaria, as Father, in the person of Simon; in other lands as the Holy Spirit." This intervention of God in the world is explained, first by the necessity of delivering Ennoia, and then by the maladministration of the angels. The prophets, it seemed, might be ignored, being inspired but by angels. Those who believed in Simon could, by magic arts, exercise dominion over the spirits

[1] *Apol.* i. 26, 56; *Dial.*, 120.

[2] Θεὸν ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως.

who ruled the world. Actions are of no importance; it is the grace of God which saves; the Law, the work of the angels, merely enslaved those who heard it. Irenæus says that Simon and Helen were worshipped in the sect, and images erected to them, in the forms respectively of Jupiter and Minerva.

As to Christology, Simon taught that the Supreme Power, to avoid recognition during his journey through this world, took the form of different varieties of angels, successively, and finally assumed a human form in Jesus. Thus he appeared amongst men in the semblance of a man, without in fact being one; in Judea, he assumed the appearance of suffering without really suffering.

It is possible that some features of Irenæus' account, here given, belong to a later development of the doctrine. But, as a whole, it tallies with Justin's story, and with that given in the Acts. The strong biblical colouring, even where the authority of the Bible was not recognised; the mixture of dualistic ideas and Hellenic rites; the practice of magic, all are quite characteristic of Samaria, the holy land of religious syncretism. Gnosticism, which was destined to attain a fuller development elsewhere, already displays its special features: *i.e.*, an abstract God; the world, the work of inferior celestial beings; the Divinity partially lost in humanity and released by redemption. Even the male and female pairs (syzygies) of the Valentinian system, are here outlined in the Supreme Power and the First Thought (Simon and Helen).

One notable feature is that the founder of this religious movement claimed to be an incarnation of the Divinity. This is evidently an imitation of the Gospel story.

Ancient writers connect the sect of Simon with that of another Samaritan, Menander of Capparatea; they also mention a certain Dositheus, perhaps earlier than either Simon or Christianity, and a certain Cleobius.[1] Menander taught at Antioch. The founders of all these sects seem,

[1] Hegesippus, in Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 22; Irenæus i. 23; Pseudo-Tert., *de Praescr.*, 46.

like Simon, to have claimed a Divine origin. Their successors were less pretentious.

One of the earliest mentioned is Saturninus of Antioch, who gained some notoriety about the time of Trajan.[1] He taught that there was one God the Father unspeakable, unknowable, Creator of the angels, archangels, powers, etc. The visible world was the work of seven angels. They created man after the likeness of a brilliant vision, which had appeared to them for a fleeting moment from the Supreme God; but at first their work was imperfect. Primitive man crawled on the ground, unable to stand erect. God took compassion on him, because He recognized his likeness to Himself: He sent, therefore, a spark of life which completed his creation. After man's death, this spark of life is set free, and returns to its primary cause.

The God of the Jews is one of the creator angels. By them the prophets were inspired; some of them even by Satan their enemy. These creator angels are in revolt against God; it was to conquer them, and especially to destroy the power of the God of the Jews, that the Saviour came. The Saviour emanated from the Supreme God;[2] He had no human birth or human body. Besides coming to defeat the God of the Jews and his companions, the Saviour aimed at the salvation of man, or rather of those men who, in their spark of life, have something of the Divine element and are susceptible of salvation.[3]

The sect considered marriage and the procreation of children the work of Satan. Most of the followers of

[1] Mentioned by Justin, *Dial.* 35, and Hegesippus, *loc. cit.* What we know of him is in Irenæus i. 24, from whom the other historians of heresies copied. In them all, Saturninus comes between the period of Simon's group and the great Gnostics of the time of Hadrian.

[2] The system requires this, though the document does not allude to it.

[3] There is here some inconsistency in St Irenæus' summary. At first sight it appears that *all* men had a spark of life, a Divine element; afterwards this is seen to be limited to a certain privileged class.

Saturninus abstained from animal food of all kinds, and this austerity won for them much admiration.

Here again, in spite of hostility to Judaism, we have the biblical notion of angels. But there are no celestial syzygies; the founder of the sect lays no claim to Divinity; and lastly, the morality is ascetic. These features distinguish the Gnosticism of Saturninus from that of Simon. His strongly defined docetism—his Saviour with the mere semblance of humanity—accords with the prepossessions already observed in St Ignatius, who himself was a native of Antioch, and like Saturninus, contemporary with Trajan.

These primitive heresies do not seem to have spread much beyond their place of origin. St Justin, who says that the Samaritans of the time of Antoninus Pius were nearly all disciples of Simon, adds that this sect had very few adherents elsewhere.[1] Trusting to a misunderstood inscription,[2] he believed that the State honoured Simon by erecting a statue to him in Rome. But it is hardly likely that the Magician's influence would have spread so far from home. All the stories of his visit to Rome, and his controversy with St Peter, are now considered purely legendary. Menander had assured his disciples that they would never die. There were some still left in the time of St Justin.

The success of Simon by no means exhausts the victories of Gnosticism in Syria, for an extraordinary multitude of sects—due either to development or to imitation—sprang up on Syrian soil. St Irenæus, comparing them to mushrooms, connects them all with Simonism. Irenæus gives them all one common name, that of Gnostics, and describes some varieties.[3] They are often denominated *ophite* sects, *serpent* sects (ὄφις, serpent), a name which seems rightly

[1] A century after Justin, Origen (*Cels.* i. 57) assures us that there were not thirty Simonians left in the world.

[2] The well-known confusion of the old Sabine god, *Semo Sancus, Deus Fidius*, with *Simo sanctus Deus*.

[3] *Haer.* i. 29-31. Neither Justin nor Hegesippus classifies these heretics; they seem to be all included in the general term of Simonians.

only to belong to those in which the serpent of the Bible played a prominent part. The names of the celestial æons, the combinations of metaphysical fancies and of biblical history, vary more or less in the different systems. But sovereign over all stands always an Ineffable Being, with a Supreme Thought (Ennoia, Barbelo, etc.), from whom proceed the Ogdoads and the Hebdomads; and there is also always an æon (Prounicos, Sophia, etc.) to whom occurs a misfortune, causing sparks from the Divine fire to fall into the lower regions. The appearance of the Demiurge, often called Ialdabaoth, is connected with this celestial catastrophe. The Demiurge knows of no celestial world above him; he believes himself to be the true and only God, and says so freely in the Bible, which he had inspired. But the Divine sparks had to be recovered from the lower world. Therefore the Æon Christ, who was one of the foremost in the Pleroma—comes down to unite himself for a time with the man Jesus, and in him inaugurates the work of salvation.

2. *Valentinus, Basilides, Carpocrates.*

It was not long after its first period of feverish activity in Syria, that Samaritan Gnosticism made its way to Egypt. Some of its varieties took deep root there, and still existed at least as late as the 4th century. Celsus knew this species of "Gnostics"; and even their literature.[1] Origen during his childhood, spent some time with a teacher from Antioch, named Paul, who was very prominent amongst the heretics of Alexandria.[2] Some fragments of their literature are being brought to light now in Coptic manuscripts and papyrus leaves. But their greatest success was acquired indirectly, by means of the far more celebrated gnoses associated with the names of the Alexandrians, Basilides, Valentinus, and Carpocrates.

According to ancient authors these heresies[3] appeared

[1] Origen, *Contra Celsum* v. 61, 62; vi. 24-28.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 2.

[3] In his Chronicle, Eusebius is more exact. He says, 134 A.D., *Basilides haeresiarcha his temporibus apparuit.* It is not, however, very apparent to what special event this date refers.

under Hadrian (117-138 A.D.). The system of Valentinus, described in detail, and refuted by St Irenæus, is the best known of the three, and was no doubt the most widespread. I will give an outline of it.

At the head of all things invisible and ineffable, is the Supreme Being, the Father, the un-begotten Abyss with his consort Sigé (Silence). When it pleased the Father to produce other beings, he impregnates Sigé, who presents him with a being like himself, the Intellect (Νοῦς),[1] and also a female, who is to the Intellect what Sigé is to the Abyss. This consort of the Intellect is the Truth. The Abyss and Sigé, the Intellect and the Truth, form the first four æons, the first Tetrad. From Intellect and Truth were born the Word and the Life; and from these again Man and the Church. Thus was completed the Ogdoad, the company of eight higher æons.

But the generation of the æons does not stop here. The last two couples gave birth, one to five, the other to six other pairs, which make in all thirty æons, fifteen males and fifteen females, divided into three groups, the Ogdoad, the Decad, and the Dodecad. These three groups constitute the Pleroma—the perfect society of ineffable beings.

So far, we are in the region of the abstract; the passage thence to the visible world involved a disturbance of the harmony of the æons, a disorder, a sort of original sin.

The last in the Dodecad and the lowest of the whole Pleroma are the couple formed by Will and Wisdom (Θελητὸς καὶ Σοφία).[2] Wisdom is suddenly fired with an uncontrollable desire to know the mysterious Father, the Abyss. But the First Cause can only be known by his first-born Son, the Intellect. This desire of Wisdom is therefore an irregular desire, a passion. This unsatisfied passion proves the ruin

[1] Here, where the sex of the abstractions is so important, the translation from the Greek is specially difficult, for the terms often change their gender when translated from one language to another.

[2] Σοφία, in Greek, signifies cleverness rather than wisdom. The right word for wisdom would be σωφροσύνη which pretty well expresses the idea of moral wisdom. A σοφός man is a man of resources rather than an honest man, Ulysses rather than Aristides.

of the being who conceived it. Wisdom, in danger of dissolution, is on the point of being absorbed into infinity, when she encounters the ὅρος, the Term of things; a sort of boundary placed by the Father around the Pleroma. Stopped by him, she recovers herself and returns to her original sphere. But under the influence of her previous passion she has conceived, without the co-operation of her consort, and given birth to an illegitimate being, shapeless and imperfect in its very essence. This being, called in Valentinian language, Hachamoth, or the Desire of Wisdom, is expelled from the Pleroma.

In order that the disorder, which Wisdom in an uncontrolled moment had introduced into the Pleroma, may not reappear, the second pair of æons, Intellect and Truth, produce a sixteenth pair of æons, Christ and the Holy Spirit,[1] this last takes the female part, in the syzygy. These two new æons teach the others to respect the limitations of their nature, and not to attempt to comprehend the incomprehensible.[2] The æons being deeply impressed, the unity of the Pleroma is thus strengthened and its harmony perfected. Then, in a burst of gratitude to the Supreme Father, all the æons combine their powers and perfections to produce the thirty-third æon, Jesus, the Saviour.

Nevertheless, Hachamoth, the Desire of Wisdom, was still outside the divine Pleroma, which sent her two successive visitors. The first of these, the Christ, imparted to this species of Aristotelian matter a kind of substantial form and a rudimentary conscience. She realizes her inferiority, and passes through a whole series of passions, sadness, fear, despair, ignorance. Her second visitor, the æon Jesus, frees her from these passions. Hence resulted material inanimate substance (ὑλική) and psychic animate substance (ψυχική), the first emanating from the passions of Hachamoth, the second, from her state of greater perfection, after her

[1] This, like the name Hachamoth, is an Orientalism. Spirit is feminine in the Semitic tongues.

[2] A wise lesson, which the modern Gnostics might with advantage learn from their remote ancestors.

passions had been eliminated. In this higher state, she was able to conceive. From the mere sight of the angels, who attended the Saviour, she conceives and gives birth to the third substance, which is pneumatic or spiritual existence (πνευματική).

So far, we are still in the ante-chambers of the inferior world, the Kenoma which is opposed to the Pleroma. The concrete world has yet to be made; only, the three substances, material, psychic, and pneumatic (or spiritual) of which it was to be composed, are as yet in existence. The Creator now at last appears. But he is scarcely a creator, in the strict sense of the word, for the elements of his work exist before him. Hachamoth cannot form him out of the spiritual (pneumatic) substance, over which she exercises no control; she forms him out of animated (psychical) substance. Thus produced, the Creator or Demiurge forms in his turn all animate (psychic) or material (hylic) beings which exist. He is the father of the first, the creator of the rest, the king of both. Among the beings thus produced, we must mention specially the seven heavens, which are angels, but not pure spirits (πνεύματα). The Demiurge works blindly; unconsciously he reproduces the Pleroma in the inferior sphere of his activity. Hachamoth, in the Kenoma, corresponds to the Abyss, and the Demiurge to the first-born Intellect, the angels or heavens to the other æons. Knowing nothing of all that is above him, the Demiurge believes himself to be the sole author and master of the universe. It is he who said through the Prophets: "I am God, and there are no other Gods beside me." He made man, but only material man, and animal (psychic) man. Certain men are superior to the others: these are pneumatic or spiritual men. They are not the work of the Demiurge exclusively: a spark of the spiritual substance, brought forth by Hachamoth, has entered into them; and by the infusion of this superior element, they constitute the "elect" of the human race.[1]

[1] There are, if we may so say, three places: the Pleroma, where the æons dwell; the Ogdoad, the dwelling-place of Hachamoth-Sophia; the Hebdomad, where the Demiurge dwells; three chiefs,

We will now examine the Gnostic system of salvation. Of the three kinds of men, some, the material men, are incapable of salvation. They must inevitably perish, with the matter of which they are formed. The spiritual (pneumatic) men have no need of salvation; they are elect by their very nature. Between these two are the psychic men, who are capable of salvation, but incapable of attaining it, without help from on high. The scheme of Redemption is intended for them. The Redeemer is formed of four elements. The first, without being actually material, has the semblance of matter; the semblance is sufficient, as matter does not need salvation. The second element is psychic, the third pneumatic, the fourth divine: this is Jesus, the last æon. These three last elements then proceed respectively from the Demiurge, Hachamoth, and from the Pleroma. The æon Jesus did not, however, descend into the Redeemer until the moment of his baptism; at the moment of his being brought before Pilate, he returned to the Pleroma, taking with him the pneumatic or spiritual element, and leaving the psychic element, clothed with his material semblance, to suffer.

When the creative power of the Demiurge is exhausted, humanity will come to an end. Hachamoth, at last transformed into a celestial æon, will take her place in the Pleroma and become the spouse of Jesus the Saviour. The spiritual (pneumatic) men will pass into the Pleroma with her; they will marry the Saviour's attendant angels. The Demiurge will take the place of Hachamoth, and thus mount one step higher on the ladder of being. He will be followed by those among the psychic men who have attained their aim; the rest, as well as material men, will perish in a general conflagration, which will destroy all matter.

In ordinary phraseology, these three kinds of men are Valentinians, ordinary Christians, and non-Christians.

the Abyss, Hachamoth, the Demiurge; three kinds of beings, the divine abstractions (æons), the inferior abstractions (matter, soul, spirit), and the concrete world.

The first are irrevocably predestined to eternal life, and the last to annihilation. A Valentinian has nothing to do but to let himself live; his acts, whatever they may be, cannot touch the spiritual nature of his being: his spirit is quite independent of his flesh, and is not responsible for it. The moral consequences of this are evident.

Valentinus is an accommodating heretic. No doubt he grants his followers a great deal of liberty in this world, and reserves for them, in the other world, all the advantages of deification. But then he allows that members of the main body of the Church, ordinary Christians, may by practising virtue attain a fairly comfortable felicity. Even the Demiurge himself, the responsible author of Creation, whom the other sects condemned pretty severely, has a very respectable career arranged for him.

The Valentinian Gnosis is throughout a nuptial Gnosticism. From the first abstract æons to the end, there are perpetual syzygies, marriages, and generations. In this, as in its morality, it recalls rather the Simonian system than that of Saturninus. Basilides,[1] on the contrary, resembles Saturninus, in that he symbolizes the long process of evolution from the abstract to the concrete otherwise than by imagery connected with sex. His æons, like the angels of Saturninus, are celibates. But his whole system is not less complicated than that of Valentinus.

From the unbegotten Father proceeds Nous; from Nous, Logos; from Logos, Phronesis; from Phronesis, Sophia and Dunamis; who, in their turn bring forth Virtues, Powers, Angels. In this manner the first heaven is populated. There are no less than 365 heavens; that

[1] This description of the system of Basilides is taken from St Irenæus (i. 28) who was followed by St Hippolytus in his *Syntagna*, (Pseudo-Tert., Epiph., *Haer.* 24; Philastr. 32). The *Philosophumena* gives quite a different idea of the system, but taken from documents, the origin of which is now considered doubtful. Clement of Alexandria has preserved some interesting particulars of its moral tendencies.

which we see is the last of them. It is inhabited by the creating angels, of whom the chief is the God of the Jews. He claimed to bring all other peoples into subjection to the nation he favoured, which gave rise to a struggle between him and his companions. In order to restore peace, and deliver man from the tyranny of the demiurges, the Supreme Father sends down Nous, who takes upon him, in Jesus, the semblance of humanity. At the time of his passion, the Redeemer transferred his own form to Simon the Cyrenian, who was crucified in his place. There was, therefore, no reason to honour the crucified, and certainly none to suffer martyrdom for his name's sake. Salvation consisted in a knowledge of the truth, as taught by Basilides.

The Old Testament is rejected as having been inspired by the creator angels. Magic, by which men acquire the mastery over these evil spirits, was much esteemed by the Basilidians. They made use of mystic words; the best known being *Abraxas* or *Abrasax;* the letters of this word in Greek notation give the number 365, that of the heavenly worlds. Their morality is as determinist as that of the Valentinians. Faith is a matter of temperament, not of will. The Passions have a sort of independent existence. They are called appendices, and are animal natures connected with the rational being, who thus finds himself burdened with the abnormal instincts of the wolf or the ape, the lion, the goat, and so on.[1] Without being essentially injured by the mistakes into which its passions lead it, the spiritual soul must nevertheless suffer from the consequences of such mistakes: each sin indeed must be expiated by suffering, if not in this life then in another, for metempsychosis formed a part of the system.

In practical life it seems that originally the Basilidians accepted the rules of ordinary morality. Clement of Alexandria tells us that Basilides and his son Isidore allowed marriage and denounced immorality; but in his day the Basilidians were, as to this, not true to the teach-

[1] Compare this feature with the passions of Hachamoth in the Valentinian system.

ing of their master. By the end of the 2nd century, they had a well-established reputation for immorality.[1]

This sect, like that of Valentinus, was primarily a school of thought.

This was also the case with the Gnosticism of Carpocrates.[2] Like Valentinus and Basilides he was an Alexandrian. His wife, Alexandria, was a native of the island of Cephalonia; and their son Epiphanes, an infant prodigy, died at the age of seventeen, having already written a book *On Justice*. Epiphanes was worshipped as a god at Cephalonia, like Simon in Samaria. In the town of Samé the Cephalonians erected a temple and a museum, where with sacrifices and literary festivals they celebrated his apotheosis.

Carpocrates was a Platonic philosopher, more or less touched with Gnostic Christianity. He believed in one God, from whom emanated a whole hierarchy of angels. The visible world is their work.[3] The souls of men first moved around the Father-God; then they fell into the power of matter, from which they have to be released to go back to their original state. Jesus, the son of Joseph, naturally born like other men, and subject as they are to metempsychosis, was able, by a remembrance of what he had known in his first existence, and by power sent from above, to obtain dominion over the rulers of this world, and to re-ascend to the Father. It is in the power of all men by following his example, and by the method he used, to despise the creators of this world and to escape from them. They can achieve this equally well, or even better, than he did. This scheme of deliverance is consistent with all conditions of life, and with every kind of act.

If this deliverance is not attained in this life, as it usually is, successive transmigrations will complete what

[1] *Strom.* iii. 1 *et seq.*

[2] Irenæus i. 25; the others followed him, except Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* iii. 2, who has preserved important fragments of the Περὶ δικαιοσύνης of Epiphanes.

[3] St Irenæus, in his summary, does not say these angels had rebelled against the Father-God; but this seems to be implied, and is asserted by St Epiphanius.

is lacking. Moreover, all actions are in themselves indifferent; it is only human opinion which makes them good or evil. The "justice," taught by Epiphanes, was essentially community of goods. All property, including women, is to be common to all, exactly as is the light of day.

In many of these particulars, we recognise the influence of Plato. The myth of Phaedrus is grafted upon the Gospel.

Magic was much esteemed by the Carpocratians. Their worship had clearly marked Hellenic features. We have already seen how they honoured the founders of the sect. They also had painted, or sculptured, images of Jesus Christ, reproduced, it was said, from a portrait of Him taken by Pilate's order; they crowned these with flowers, as also those of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and other wise men.

St Irenæus refuses to believe that these heretics carried their moral teaching to its extreme limits, or that they went so far as to give themselves up to the abominations which it would authorise. But he acknowledges their moral perversion and the scandal caused thereby. He reproaches the Carpocratians for degrading Christianity, and asks how they can dare claim to belong to Jesus, who, in the Gospel, inculcates such a very different moral code.

The Carpocratians had an answer to this. They declared that the true teaching of Jesus was given secretly to the disciples, and by them communicated only to those worthy of it.

3. *Gnostic Teaching*

It is unnecessary to go farther with the description of the various Gnostic systems. Certain common and fundamental conceptions are easily discernible under their diversity.

1. God, the Creator and Lawgiver of the Old Testament, is not the True God. Above him, at an infinite distance, is the Father-God, the supreme First Cause of all being.

2. The God of the Old Testament knew not the True God, and in this ignorance the world shared, until the appearance of Jesus Christ, who did indeed proceed from the True God.

3. Between the True God and creation is interposed a most complicated series of beings, divine in their origin; at some point or other in this series, occurs a catastrophe, which destroys the harmony of the whole. The visible world—often including its creator—originates in this primal disorder.

4. In humanity there are some elements capable of redemption, having come in one way or another from the celestial world above the Demiurge. Jesus Christ came into the world to deliver them from it.

5. As the incarnation could not really amount to a true union between divinity and matter, the accursed, the Gospel story is explained as a moral and transitory union between a divine æon and the concrete personality of Jesus, or again, by a simple semblance of humanity.

6. Neither the passion nor the resurrection of Christ is therefore real; the future of the predestinate does not permit of the resurrection of the body.

7. The divine element which has strayed into humanity, that is the predestinated soul, has no solidarity with the flesh which oppresses it. Either the flesh must be annihilated by asceticism (rigorism), or at least the responsibility of the soul for the weaknesses of the flesh must be denied (libertinism).

Such conceptions could certainly not appeal to the authority of the Old Testament. The Old Testament was absolutely repudiated, as being the inspiration of the Creator. The main body of the Church held to the Israelite Bible, and found a way by which Jahvè could be identified with the Heavenly Father. That the Gnostics never did. The letter of Ptolemy to Flora,[1]

[1] Epiphanius, *Haer.* xxxiii. 3-7. Re-edited with comments, by Harnack, in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Academy of Berlin, 1902, p 507-541.

shows us how the Valentinians practised biblical interpretation. There, the Mosaic Law, as an inference from certain texts in the Gospels, is attributed to three different authors: Moses, the Elders of Israel, and God. In that which is of God, a distinction is drawn between the laws that are good—those of the Decalogue and of natural morality—which the Saviour did not abolish, but fulfilled; and the laws that are unrighteous, such as that of retaliation (*lex talionis*), abrogated by the Saviour; and lastly, those laws which had but the value of shadows, or symbols, such as the ceremonial laws. But it is clear that this sacred Law, composed as it is of good and bad precepts, could not be attributed to the infinitely perfect Being, any more than to the enemy of all good. It is therefore the work of an intermediate God, of the Creator. "Flora," says the teacher, concluding his argument, "must not be disturbed to hear that the spirit of evil, and the intermediate spirit (the Creator) both emanate from the Being who is supremely perfect." "You will learn this," he says, "God helping you, by means of the apostolic tradition, which has been transmitted to us also, along with the custom of judging all doctrines, by the rule of the Saviour's teaching."

This exegetical attitude is, in fact, easy to understand The religious thinkers of the 2nd century felt, as we do, a perpetual temptation to criticize Nature and the Law. Man may well complain of the brutality of the forces of Nature, not only on his own account, but for the sake of all creatures; in other words, man from his very circumscribed point of view, is naturally inclined to maintain that the world is ill-arranged. So likewise, the Law being laid down for the general run of cases, ignores, and cannot but ignore, a thousand particular instances, and in consequence it often appears to be absurd and unjust. But the heart of man dimly discerns that, above this world with its miseries, there is an Infinite Goodness, manifesting itself in love, and not in simple justice. Suppose that a highly cultivated Greek, in this mood, had the Bible put into his hands. The Old Testament confronts him with

an awful God, who creates man, it is true, but almost immediately punishes the whole human race for the sin committed by the original human pair He created; who then repents Him of having permitted the propagation of the human race, and destroys all but one family, with most of the animals, who assuredly were quite innocent of the misdeeds of which man is accused; who then befriends a company of adventurers, protects them against all other nations, sends them on conquering, pillaging raids, shares their spoils, and takes a leading part in the massacre of the vanquished; who endows them with a Law, containing by the side of many equitable provisions many others which are strange and most impracticable. Enlightened Jews and Christians explained these difficulties by ingenious allegories. We cannot do this; but we have got out of the difficulty nevertheless, by denying the objectivity of these tares in the Lord's field, and regarding them as an expression, in the sacred text, of a progressive purification of the conception of God, in the minds of the men of old. But no such explanation was within the reach of the earlier thinkers. The Gnostic philosophers did not make the use of allegory which the orthodox did. And as they had to make someone responsible for Nature and the Law, they fell back on the God of Israel. The Gospel, on the contrary, where they thought a different note was struck, seemed to them a revelation of supreme Goodness and of absolute Perfection.

This arrangement might seem ingenious; but in reality, it only put the difficulty further back. The Demiurge might explain Nature and the Law. But then how was the Demiurge to be explained? Marcion, as it will be seen, never attempted to solve the enigma. The others only succeeded by interposing, between the Supreme God and the Demiurge, a whole series of æons, whose perfection gradually diminished as they receded from the first Being, so that at last confusion was possible, and did indeed arise amongst them. This arbitrary and inadequate solution could not but excite trenchant criticism.

Thus it is evident that the only possible justification for these systems would have to be sought in the Gospel of Jesus, and they found it in written documents—amongst which appeared at an early date our four canonical Gospels[1]—and also in special written and oral traditions. These traditions claimed to reproduce, not the Gospel story known to all, but secret conversations, occurring as a rule after the resurrection, in which the Saviour explained to His apostles, to Mary Magdalene and the other women of His company, the most profound mysteries of Gnosticism. Thus originated the gospels of Thomas, of Philip, of Judas, the greater and lesser questions of Mary, the Gospel of Perfection. Other books, supposed to have been written by the holy men of old, Elias, Moses, Abraham, Adam, Eve, and especially Seth, played a very important part in some circles. As in the main body of the Church, so also among the sects, there were inspired prophets, whose words were preserved and formed another class of sacred books; such were the prophets Martiades and Marsianus amongst the "Archontics."

The Basilidians relied on the tradition of a certain Glaucias, an alleged interpreter of St Peter. There existed also a Gospel of Basilides, to form which St Matthew's and St Luke's Gospels had been made use of, and the prophets Barkabbas and Barkoph, on whose books Isidore, the son of Basilides, wrote a commentary. The founder of the sect had himself written twenty-four books of "Exegetics" on his own gospel. Valentinus also made use of the name of a disciple of the apostles, Theodas, who was said to have been a disciple of St Paul, and his sect boasted of a "Gospel of Truth."

These were their authorities. The teaching spread from one to another, and culminated in the formation of little groups of initiates, who, as a rule, first tried to combine their esoteric doctrines with the ordinary religious

[1] The Gnostics never quote from the Acts, nor, as may well be imagined, from the Apocalypse.

life of the Christian community. But they were soon discovered, and they then formed autonomous associations, where they developed their systems, extended their initiations, and celebrated their mysterious rites freely. External forms possessed considerable importance in their eyes, and they habitually appealed to the senses, and strove to excite the imagination. They were given to using exotic terms, Hebrew words repeated or pronounced backwards, and all the customary paraphernalia of sorcery. Thus they acquired an influence over weak and restless minds, eagerly receptive of occult science, initiations, and mysteries; and over those attracted by Ophism and oriental cults.

The three schools, of Valentinus, Basilides, and Carpocrates—especially the two first—appear to have been very popular in their native land. Clement of Alexandria often speaks of Basilides and Valentinus, and he had thoroughly mastered their books. Outside Egypt, the Basilidian sect was not so much in vogue as that of Valentinus, who early moved to Rome, where under Bishops Hyginus, Pius, and Anicetus he stayed some time.[1] According to Tertullian, he there lived at first among the faithful, until his dangerous speculations and teaching led to his exclusion from the Christian community, at first for a time, but ultimately altogether.[2]

[1] Irenæus iii. 4, 2; Οὐαλεντῖνος μὲν γὰρ ἦλθεν εἰς Ῥώμην ἐπὶ Ὑγίνου, ἤκμασε δὲ ἐπὶ Πίου καὶ παρέμεινεν ἕως Ἀνικήτου. Tertullian (*Præscr.* 30) seems to say that Marcion and Valentinus lived for some time at Rome as orthodox Christians and members of the Church, *in catholicae primo doctrinam credidisse apud ecclesiam Romanensem sub episcopatu Eleutheri benedicti.* The name of Eleutherius is a mistake for that of someone else. It is indeed difficult to reconcile this account with that of St Epiphanius, who represents Valentinus as born in Egypt (he mentions the place), brought up in Alexandria in the wisdom of the Greeks, and afterwards spreading his system, in Egypt, in Rome, and finally in Cyprus, where he separated himself completely from the Church (*Haer.* xxxi. 2, 7).

[2] Elsewhere (*Adv. Valent.* 4) Tertullian attributes the schism of Valentinus to annoyance at having failed as a candidate for the episcopate; a confessor had been chosen instead of him. Some have thought this confessor was the Roman martyr Telesphorus, and have,

This did not prevent the Valentinian sect from spreading to some extent everywhere. In Tertullian's time, the "school" of the Valentinians was the most popular of all the heretical associations. The original doctrine of the founder was preserved, but with some admixtures, which produced various schools of thought. St Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria have described the most celebrated among their teachers, Heracleon, Ptolemy, Mark, and Theodotus.

Carpocrates, or at least his heresy, also appeared on the scene in Rome. In the time of Pope Anicetus (about 155 A.D.) a woman of this sect, named Marcellina, came to Rome, and gained many adherents.

4. *Marcion*

The Syrian quacks ceased not to spread their oriental gnosticism, with its strangely-named æons and all the Semitic glitter of its magic. In Alexandria subtle spirits tricked out these absurdities in philosophic garb to suit the local taste. But neither accomplished more than the foundation of some lodges of initiates of higher or lower degree. Meantime, a man arose who set himself to extract, from this heterogeneous conglomeration, a few simple notions, in harmony with those of ordinary men, as a basis for a religion, which should be Christian, of course, but new, anti-Jewish, and dualist. This new religion was no longer to find expression in secret confraternities, but in a church. And the man was Marcion.

Marcion came from the town of Sinope, a renowned seaport on the Black Sea. His father was a bishop; he himself had made a fortune at sea. He came to Rome,[1]

in consequence, connected the story with Rome. But Irenæus, who says that Telesphorus ἐνδόξως ἐμαρτύρησεν does not suggest that he had escaped from death, and was thus able to benefit by the *praerogativa martyrii*. It is not at all certain that this episode in the life of Valentinus occurred in Rome, rather than in Alexandria.

[1] According to a story which is said to go back as far as St Hippolytus (Pseudo-Tert. 51; Epiphanius, *Haer.* xlii. 1) the reason Marcion left Sinope was that he was excommunicated for having

about 140 A.D., and associated himself at first with the congregation of the faithful. He even made a gift to the community of a large sum of money, 200 sesterces (about £1600).

This gift was perhaps intended to conciliate public opinion, which his language began to disturb. In fact he was required by the leaders of the Church to give them an account of his faith; he did so, in the form of a letter. Later this letter was often quoted by orthodox controversialists.

Marcion was a disciple of St Paul. The antithesis between Faith and the Law, between Grace and Justice, between the Old Testament and the New Covenant, on which the apostle lays stress, was according to Marcion the foundation of all religion. Paul had with regret resigned himself to part from his brothers in Israel. But Marcion transformed this severance into deep-rooted antagonism. According to him, there was no agreement possible between the Revelation of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Old Testament. A choice must be made between the infinite love and supreme goodness, of which Jesus was the ambassador, and the rigid justice of the God of Israel. "You must not," said he to the Roman presbytery, "pour new wine into old bottles, nor sew a new piece upon a worn-out garment." His real meaning was disclosed ever more clearly, by one antithesis after another. The God of the Jews, of Creation, and of the Law, could not be identical with the Father of Mercy, and must therefore be regarded as inferior to Him.

Thus Marcion's doctrine also led up to dualism, like that of the Gnostics, although they started from very different premises. He troubled himself neither with

seduced a young girl. But neither St Irenæus, nor Tertullian, who was certainly not biased in favour of Marcion, appear to know this tale. A still less trustworthy account, in an anonymous preface to the fourth Gospel, speaks of him as coming to Ephesus, from Pontus, with letters of commendation from some of his fellow countrymen, but as being soon unmasked as a heretic and rejected by St John. (Wordsworth, *N. T. latine, sec. ed. s. Hieron.*, vol. i., fasc. 4 (1895), p. 490; *cf.* Philastrius, 45.)

metaphysics nor with cosmology; he made no attempt to bridge the distance between the infinite and the finite by a whole series of æons, nor to discover by what catastrophe in the region of the ideal, the disorder of the visible world was to be explained.

The Redeemer, in his eyes, was a manifestation of the true and good God. He saves mankind by the revelation of Him from whom he comes, and by the work of the Cross. But, as he could not owe anything to the Creator, he had but a semblance of humanity. In the 15th year of Tiberius, he manifests himself suddenly in the synagogue of Capernaum. Jesus had neither birth, nor growth, nor even the semblance of them; the semblance only began with his preaching, and was continued during the remainder of the Gospel story, including the Passion.

Not all men will be saved, but only some. Their duty is to live in the strictest asceticism, both as to eating and drinking, and as to relations of sex. Marriage is forbidden. Baptism may only be granted to the married if they agree to separate.

These fundamental conceptions of Marcion's are not quite consistent. The origin of his God of justice is not clear, nor why the sacrifice on the Cross had such value in his eyes when it was only that of a phantom. Marcion did not consider it incumbent on him to explain everything, nor to offer to speculators a complete system. Mystery suited his religious soul. But it is easier to abuse theology than to do without it. Marcion's views showed the effects of his personal contact with the Gnostics. Tradition says that, in Rome he was connected with a Syrian, Cerdo (Κέρδων), who had preceded him there. It is not easy to discover, from the details we have about Cerdo, what was his influence on Marcion, nor exactly when his school became merged in the sect of that great innovator. Perhaps he induced Marcion to condemn not only the Law, but Creation itself, and consequently to reduce the Gospel story to absolute Docetism.

However this may be, and whatever may be the date of his association with Cerdo, Marcion was in the end

convinced that the Roman Church would not follow him in his distorted Paulinism. The actual rupture took place 144 A.D.[1] The sum of money Marcion had handed over to the common fund was returned to him, but they kept his profession of faith. A Marcionite community was immediately organised in Rome, and quickly prospered. Thus originated a vast movement, which, by its vigorous propaganda soon spread throughout Christendom.

Marcion's teaching laid claim to no secret tradition or prophetic inspiration. It did not seek in any way to accommodate its ideas to those of the Old Testament. Its method of exegesis has no touch of the allegorical, but is purely literal. This led to an entire repudiation of the Old Testament. Of the New Testament, or rather of all the apostolic writings, nothing was retained, except those of St Paul and the third Gospel. And even so, the collection of St Paul's letters did not include the Pastoral Epistles, and in the ten epistles retained, as well as in the text of St Luke, there were omissions. The Galilean apostles were considered to have but imperfectly understood the Gospel: they had made the mistake of considering Jesus as the envoy of the Creator. This was why the Lord had raised up St Paul to rectify their teaching. Even in the letters of Paul, passages occur too laudatory of the Creator; these passages could only be interpolations.

To the New Testament, thus cut down, the book of Antitheses, by the founder of the sect, was added before long. It was but a list of the contradictions traceable between the Old Testament and the Gospel, between the good God and the Creator. These sacred books, veneration for Marcion, and the practice of his ascetic morality, were common to all Marcionite Churches.

5. *The Church and Gnosticism*

The reception given to these doctrines by the Christian communities could scarcely be expected to be favourable.

[1] The date preserved in the sect. (Tert., *Adv. Marc.* i. 19; *cf.* Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 306.

The solidarity of the two Testaments, the reality of the Gospel story, the authority of the common moral code, these were all too deeply rooted in tradition and in religious education, to be easily shaken. No Church, as a body, allowed itself to be led away. The leaders of the various sects, however, did their worst. In Rome, above all, a centre of especial importance, many efforts were made, we are told, by Valentinus, Cerdo, and Marcion, to get the control of the Church into their own hands. Towards the end of the 2nd century, another Gnostic, Florinus, is seen to be in office among the Roman priests.[1] The attitude of Hermas is very interesting. He insists strongly upon the divinity of the Creator. The first command given by the Shepherd is: "Before all things, believe that God is One, that He has created and framed all things, and called them into existence out of nothing, and that in Him all things are contained." Just as decidedly does he proclaim the responsibility of the soul for the deeds of the flesh: "Take heed never to allow the thought in thy heart that this flesh of thine perishes, and never allow it to be stained with sin. If thou defile thy flesh, thou defilest also the Holy Spirit. And if thou defile the Holy Spirit, thou shalt not live."[2] By these two precepts, Hermas warns his readers against both the theological and the moral danger, dualism and libertinism. In other places, he sketches the portraits of heretic preachers as well as of their hearers.

"These," he says, "are they who sow strange doctrines, who turn the servants of God from the right way, specially sinners, hindering them from conversion, and filling their minds with foolish teaching. Nevertheless, there is still room for hope that, in the end, they also may be converted. Many of them have come back since thou hast declared to them my precepts: others also will be converted." So much for the masters, now for the disciples: "They have

[1] Irenæus in Eusebius v. 15, 20. When his opinions were known, Florinus was of course deprived of his office.

[2] This idea is still more strongly expressed in the Second Epistle of Clement.

believed and have the faith, but they are not teachable, they are bold and self-satisfied, seeking to know everything, and knowing nothing. Their self-confidence has darkened their minds. A rash presumption has entered into them. They boast of their great penetration; they readily undertake on their own responsibility to teach doctrine; but they have not even common sense. . . . Audacity and vain presumption are great curses: they have been the ruin of many. But others acknowledging their error, have returned to a simple faith, and have submitted themselves to those who really know. To the others perhaps also may repentance be allowed, for they are not so much wicked as foolish." [1]

This was written when Valentinus and other renowned teachers were spreading their heresies in the Christian society of Rome. If Hermas is alluding to them, he is very optimistic. But, whether he had in view the subtle dreams of Valentinus, or, as is quite possible, the more common forms of Gnosticism imported from Syria and Asia, certainly the sublimated theology of the Gnostics, with its Pleroma, its Ogdoad, its Archons, and all its host of celestial æons, seems to have made but little impression on him; he does not even see in it any very serious danger. A simple mind and upright heart are, to his thinking, impregnable fortresses.

He was right as far as the generality of mankind were concerned. But, as it has been said, philosophical dreams had attractions for some, and the repentance preached by Hermas was less convenient than the justification of the Gnostics. It is therefore not surprising that the language of the ecclesiastical leaders generally betrays more apprehension and indignation than does that of the simple-minded prophet. Moreover, he does not seem to have known Marcion; at least he can hardly have been cognisant of the great increase of the Marcionite Church, which was a far more formidable rival than were the bands of Syrian adventurers and Alexandrian teachers.

St Polycarp and St Justin take a less optimistic view.

[1] *Sim.* v. 7; ix. 22.

The old Bishop of Smyrna, who lived to a great age, had known Marcion before the latter went to Rome. St Polycarp met him after he had broken with the Church, and Marcion having asked if he recognised him, Polycarp replied: "I recognise the first-born of Satan."[1] Justin not only included Marcion among the heretics refuted in his *Syntagma*[2] *against all Heresies;* but he also devoted another *Syntagma*, a special treatise,[3] to Marcion. The first was already published when (*c.* 152 A.D.) he wrote his first Apology, where he twice alludes to the heresiarch. "A certain Marcion, from Pontus, is even now still preaching of another god, greater than the Creator. Thanks to the help of demons, he has persuaded many men, in all countries (κατὰ πᾶν γένος ἀνθρώπων), to blaspheme and deny God the Author of this universe. . . . Many listen to him as though he alone were the possessor of the truth, and they laugh at us. Nevertheless they have no proof of their statements. Like lambs carried off by the wolf, they stupidly allow themselves to be devoured by these atheistic doctrines, and by devils." The tone of this shows how deep the wound was, and testifies to Marcion's success from the first.

The Gnostics wrote much. This was to be expected, for they claimed to open the secrets of a higher knowledge to the intellectual élite. It is equally obvious that with their failure as a religious party their literature would vanish. And so, until quite recently, the Gnostic books have been known only from the information given by orthodox writers. A few titles, a few scattered quotations, some descriptions of the various systems, evidently taken from the writings of the sectarians themselves, this is all that has come down in this way.[4] There is, however, an exception—the letter from Ptolemy to Flora, already quoted—preserved by St Epiphanius, where we see how

[1] Irenæus, *Haer.* iii. 3.

[2] Justin, *Apol.* i. 26.

[3] Irenæus, *Haer.* iv. 6.

[4] Harnack has had the patience to compile a minute catalogue of all these bibliographic allusions. *Die Ueberlieferung und der Bestand der altchristlichen Literatur*, p. 144-231.

Gnostic teaching was enforced by the authority of the Bible and by Christian tradition.

But some time back the secrets of Egyptian manuscripts began to reveal themselves, and Coptic versions of the actual books of the old heretics have come to light. Those hitherto discovered are not books of the Alexandrian schools of Basilides, Valentinus, and Carpocrates, but of those sects of Syrian origin described by St Irenæus[1] under the general term Gnostic. One of these documents he certainly knew: the chapter he devotes to the Gnostics of the Barbelo type (i. 29) is but an incomplete extract from it.[2]

Other less ancient documents,[3] of the beginning or end

[1] *Haer.* i. 29 *et seq.*

[2] This book appears to have borne the title of the Gospel of Mary, or the Apocrypha of John; it is found in a papyrus MS. at present preserved in Berlin. It is followed by another synthetical treatise called the "Wisdom of Jesus Christ," and by a story of St Peter, of Gnostic tendency, in which for the first time appears the story of his paralysed daughter, who was cured by him, but afterwards again attacked by her infirmity (Petronilla). These documents will be published in the second volume of the collection of Carl Schmidt (see next note). Meantime the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Academy of Berlin, 1896, p. 839, may be consulted.

[3] Collected by Carl Schmidt, in the selection from the Fathers, in the Academy of Berlin. His publication is called *Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften.* The second volume will contain the texts enumerated in the preceding note; the first (1905) gives those in two MSS., the *Askewianus*, a parchment (*Brit. Mus. Add.* 5114) and the *Brucianus*, on papyrus, preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The *Askewianus* contains a compilation to which the name of *Pistis Sophia* has been wrongly given. According to Harnack, the simplest part of this farrago should be identified with the "Little Questions of Mary," mentioned (*Haer.* xxvi. 8) by St Epiphanius. Yet the "Great Questions of Mary," which St Epiphanius quotes at the same time as proceeding from the same source, shows the obscene tendency referred to; which is not the case with the *Pistis Sophia.* In the *Brucianus*, we have first a work in two books, in which Schmidt recognizes the two books of Jeû, said to be in the *Pistis Sophia*, and afterwards, a passage of general explanation which is certainly connected with the system of the *Sethites* or *Archontics*, described by St Epiphanius, *Haer.* xxxix. and xl. Whatever may be thought of the suggested identifications, certainly the writings contained in both these MSS. proceed from the same heretical group.

of the 3rd century, witness to interesting developments in these same sects. In this strange world, two very different moral tendencies early appear, one towards asceticism, the other towards the most abominable moral aberrations. The books so far discovered are all inspired by asceticism, and are very distinctly opposed to the second tendency.

To confront this heretical literature, a mass of orthodox polemics soon grew up. Some attacked one sect in particular. Valentinus and Marcion, especially the latter, roused many refutations. Others undertook to draw up a catalogue of the different sects, and delighted to expose their oddities in contrast to the sober, universal, and traditional teaching of the orthodox Church. This mode of treatment was very early in vogue. St Justin had already written *Against all Heresies*, when he published his Apology.[1] Hegesippus also dealt with the same subject, not in a special book, but in his *Memoirs*. Most of this has been lost. But we still have the work of St Irenæus, a most valuable book, which though it was specially directed against the Valentinian sect, contains a description of all the principal heresies, up to the time (*c.* 185 A.D.) when the author wrote. After him, Hippolytus twice composed a catalogue of all the sects, in two different forms, and at two different periods of his career. His first work, his *Syntagma against all Heresies*, is now lost; but we are able to reconstruct it,[2] thanks to the description given of it by Photius,[3] and to the extracts preserved.[4] Hippolytus, like Irenæus, did not confine

[1] Σύνταγμα κατὰ πασῶν γεγενημένων αἱρέσεων (*Apol.* i. 26).

[2] This has been done by R. A. Lipsius (*Die Quellenkritik des Epiphanios*, Wien, 1865.

[3] Cod. 121.

[4] The catalogue of heresies printed at the end of the *De Praescriptionibus* of Tertullian is only a summary of the *Syntagma* of Hippolytus; this little work belongs apparently to a date somewhere about the year 210. Epiphanius (*circ.* 377) and Philastrius (*circ.* 385), the first especially, have also made great use of the *Syntagma*. And finally, the chapter on Noetus, which forms the end of his work, has come down to us separately.

himself to the Gnostic systems; his description includes other heresies as well: of these, the thirty-second and last was the Modalist heresy of Noetus. In his second book, *The Refutation of all Heresies* (better known under the title of *Philosophumena*), he comes down to rather later times.

In the literature of later date a prominent place must be assigned to the great treatise of St Epiphanius, the *Panarion*. This compilation is open to criticism on some points, but the materials for it were derived from most important sources, from the *Syntagma* of Hippolytus, that of St Irenæus, and a number of heretical books, known to the author and examined, and quoted by him; not to mention firsthand observations made by himself on sects still in existence in his day. Compared with the *Panarion*, the writings of Philastrius of Brescia, of St Augustine, and of Theodoret, are of but secondary value.

CHAPTER XII

EVANGELIZATION AND APOLOGETICS IN THE SECOND CENTURY

Attractiveness of Christianity; of its faith; its hopes; its martrydoms and its brotherly spirit. Unpopularity of the Christians. Animosity of the philosophers. Celsus and his *True Discourse*. Christian defence. "Apologies" addressed to the Emperors: Quadratus, Aristides, Justin, Melito, Apollinaris, Miltiades, Athenagoras. Marcus Aurelius and the Christians. "Apologies" addressed to the people: Tatian.

In spite of all the laws for its suppression, Christianity continued to spread. About the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, *i.e.*, about a century and a half after its birth, Christianity had taken root in the most remote provinces. There were Christian communities in Spain, Gaul, Germany, Africa, Egypt, and even beyond the Euphrates and the Roman frontier. Evangelization had begun with the Jewish communities and their proselytes, but it soon turned direct to the pagans. In this field, it quickly outstripped and absorbed the rival proselytizing movement of the Jews; it presented all the advantages of the religion of Israel, with the addition of more facility of adaptation. Greek, Roman, and Egyptian polytheism it met by the doctrine of One supreme God; idolatry, by spiritual worship; bloody sacrifices and riotous pageants, by devotional exercises of the utmost simplicity, prayers, readings, homilies, and common meals; and the dissolute libertinism, on which the ancient religions imposed no check, was encountered by an austere morality,

maintained by the restraints of the life in common. The universal craving to know the origin of all things, and the final destiny of man, found satisfaction in teaching derived from ancient and venerable sacred books, which carried far greater weight than the fables of the poets. The doctrine of angels and more especially that of devils, solved many difficulties as to the origin and power of religious error. Satan and his host afforded an explanation of the problem of evil in general, and of particular ills, and thus formed a bulwark against the rival propaganda of the dualist Mithras worship.

The Jews had demonstrated the strength of all this before. The Christians imparted a new reality to it, by holding up to the love, the gratitude, and the adoration of men the person of their Founder, Jesus, Son of God, revealer and saviour, manifested in human form, seated now at the right hand of God the Father, and soon to appear as the supreme Judge and King of the elect. On Him, on His life portrayed in the new sacred books, and on His coming again—the end and aim of all their hopes—their hearts were continually set. Nay more. In some ways Jesus was present with them still. In the Eucharist, He lived in and amongst His own. And the marvellous charismata—prophecies, visions, ecstasies, and gifts of healing—were to them like a second point of contact with the unseen God. And thence there sprang, both in Christian communities and in individuals, a religious concentration and enthusiasm which proved a most efficacious and powerful means of conversion. Souls surrendered to the attraction of the divine.

And truly it was necessary that the attraction should be strong, for in those days, to aspire to Christianity was to aspire to martyrdom. No one could conceal from himself that by becoming a Christian, he became a sort of outlaw. Let but the authorities be on the alert, or the neighbours ill-disposed, and the heaviest penalties—usually death—ensued. But even martyrdom allured some souls; while for many it formed assuredly a very powerful incentive to belief. The fortitude of the confessor, the serenity with

which he endured torture and met his death, the confidence of his upward gaze on the heavenly vision, all this was new, striking, and contagious.[1]

Another magnet, more commonplace perhaps, but not less strong, was the brotherliness, the sweet and deep affection which bound together all the members of the Christian community. Amongst them, differences of rank, social position, race or country were hardly felt. In this atmosphere of concentrated purpose they melted away. What did it matter to Jesus whether a man were patrician or plebeian, slave or free, Greek or Egyptian? All were brothers, and they called each other by that name; their gatherings were often known by the name of *agape* (love); they helped one another, quite simply, without ostentation or pride. Between the communities there was a constant interchange of advice, information, and practical help. The joy of their membership in "the Church of God" at home, did not hinder their rejoicing to form part of the great household of God, the Church at large, the Catholic Church, and in their destiny as citizens of the fast-approaching Kingdom of God. All this implied a warmth and vitality which did not exist in the pagan religious confraternities, or burial societies, the only associations at all to be compared to the Christian congregations. How many must have said of them: see the purity and simplicity of their religion! Their trust in their God, and His promises! Their love for one another! And their happiness together![2]

Nevertheless, its attractiveness did not touch the mass of mankind, for Christianity was far from being disseminated everywhere, and multitudes were hardly, if at all, aware of its existence. And many viewed it with profound horror. Besides being a new cult, or rather a new way of life

[1] Marcus Aurelius (*Thoughts* xi. 3) notes this attitude, but without approval. If the Gallileans Epictetus speaks of (Arrian, *Diss.* IV. vii. 6) were really Christians, that passage may also refer to it.

[2] On the great attractions of infant Christianity, see Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christenthums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, 1902, p. 72-209.

imported from a barbarous country, and preached at first by men of a despised race, there were rumours current about Christianity, and especially about the Christian assemblies, which were as horrible as they appeared well authenticated. Christians were atheists, impious; they had no god, or rather they adored a god with an ass's head. In their meetings, when no outsiders were present, they indulged in infamous debauchery and cannibal feasts These foolish tales were current everywhere, and there is good reason to believe that they originated very early. The common people believed them, the world repeated them; they were echoed even amongst the wise and serious, who indeed brought still other charges against the Christians. They blamed the Christians for the slight interest they took in public affairs, for their apartness, their want of energy, and their apostasy, so to speak, not only from the religion of Rome, but also from ordinary life and common social duties. There is something of all this in the accounts given by Tacitus and Suetonius. Tacitus regarded Christianity as an abominable superstition, and Christians as atrocious criminals, worthy of the severest punishment. Suetonius also talks of it as a pernicious superstition.[1]

As to the rhetoricians and philosophers, Christianity annoyed them to an indescribable degree. They saw in it a rival. That empire over the minds of men which, in the days of the wise emperors, they looked on as their own special prerogative, was passing into the hands of obscure preachers, without authority, jurisdiction, or even learning. This new doctrine, with which unknown men, nobodies, were leading away women and children, and restless and timid souls, made far more impression than did the finest lectures of the State orators. And they were unsparing in their objurgations both by word of mouth,[2] like the cynic Crescens, St Justin's opponent,

[1] *Nero*, 16.

[2] Although it is generally supposed that the rhetorician Aristides had the Christians in view when he wrote the concluding objurgations of his discourse, πρὸς Πλάτωνα (*Or.* 46), I do not think this

or in writing, like Fronto, the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, and above all, the philosopher Celsus. Fronto believed in the Thyestean feasts, of which he accused the Christians.[1] His other objections we know but partially. Celsus' work, the *True Discourse*, could be almost entirely rewritten from the quotations of Origen, who refuted it much later.[2]

The aim of Celsus in the *Discourse*, was to convert the Christians by shaming them out of their religion. And he at least took the trouble to study his subject. He does not repeat the popular calumnies; he had read the Bible and many Christian books. He is aware of their divisions, and grasps the difference between the Gnostic sects and the main body of the Church. First Christianity is refuted from the Jewish point of view, in a dialogue in which a Jew sets forth his objections to Jesus Christ. Then Celsus comes forward on his own account with a wholesale attack on both the Jewish and the Christian religions; he asserts the striking superiority of the religion and philosophy of the Greeks, carps at Bible history and the resurrection of Christ, and declares that the apostles and their successors had but added to the original absurdities. He is not, however, always blindly unjust: he approves of some things, notably of the Gospel ethics, and the doctrine of the Logos. He even winds up by an exhortation to the Christians to abandon their religious and political isolation, and to conform to the common religion, for the sake of the State and the Roman Empire, which these divisions weaken. That is his chief anxiety. Celsus was a highly cultivated man of the world, but with a practical turn. Like all cultivated people he takes a general interest in philosophy, but is

is the case. He alludes rather to the more or less cynical philosophers like Crescens, Peregrinus, etc. In one place (p. 402 Dindorf) he compares them to τοῖς ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ δυσσεβέσι, that is to the Jews of Palestine.

[1] *Octavius* 9, 31. Possibly Cæcilian, the pagan inquirer in the dialogue of Minucius Felix, was inspired by the discourse of Fronto; but only the particulars about the feasts are definitely quoted from Fronto.

[2] Aubé, *Histoire des persécutions*, ii., p. 277.

not a partizan of any one sect. He supports the established religion, not from any deep conviction, but because a well-bred man should have a religion, and naturally the received religion of the State.

The *True Discourse*, published towards the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, does not appear to have much impressed those to whom it was addressed. The Christian writers of the 2nd century never allude to it. About 246 A.D. it fell by chance into the hands of Origen, who till then had never heard either of the book or its author.

Nevertheless, Celsus was not quite insignificant. He was a friend of Lucian, who dedicated his book on *The False Prophet* to him. Lucian also alludes to the Christians, but only in passing in his usual flippant manner. They supplied some features in his celebrated caricature "The death of Peregrinus." But he can hardly be said to have attacked them. On the contrary, his endless gibes against the gods and the religions of his day rather told in their favour. In his *False Prophet*, he acknowledges, without bitterness, that they had no more sympathy with religious impostors than he had himself.

The Christians, for their part, were extremely jealous for the good name of their religion. They could not tolerate the calumnies on their meetings, though indeed against such slanders no defence is possible. The foolishness which accepts them is ineradicable. Is not the stupid accusation of practising ritual murder brought against the Jews, again and again, even in our own day? It was, however, necessary to protest. And on the other hand, it was but natural, that, under the good emperors, Christians should wish to come to an understanding with the authorities, and to convince them that their persecution of the followers of Christ was undeserved. And when the pens of skilled rhetoricians and philosophers gave literary expression to the hatred of the Christians, was it not fitting that those "brethren" whom God had endowed with

intellectual gifts, should use them for the common defence? Thus originated the "Apologies," some of which are still extant, whilst others have left traces more or less distinct.

First must be noticed those addressed to the emperors, beginning with Hadrian (117-138), to whom Quadratus presented his Apology. He appears to be the same person as a certain Quadratus who lived in Asia at that time, and was a distinguished missionary and prophet. His work has not come down to us, but was still read in the time of Eusebius,[1] who says that Quadratus was induced to compose it, by the fact that wicked men were "troubling the brethren." This is a little vague, but corresponds well enough with the state of things in the province of Asia, revealed by the rescript of Fundanus. In the Apology, Quadratus alluded to people cured, or raised from the dead by the Saviour, as being still alive in his time.[2]

The Apologies of Aristides and of Justin were addressed to the Emperor Antoninus (138-161).[3] Aristides was an Athenian philosopher. His address has only recently been discovered.[4] It is of an extremely simple character. He compares the notions of the Divinity held by

[1] *H. E.* iv. 3; *cf.* iii. 37, and v. 17 for the prophet Quadratus.

[2] Εἰς τοὺς ἡμετέρους χρόνους. The passage is reproduced by Eusebius, *loc. cit.* This does not mean alive until the time of Hadrian. Papias, who seems to have read the Apology of Quadratus (*Texte und Unt.*, vol. v., p. 170) may have been led by that to make the exorbitant assertion, ἕως Ἀδριανοῦ ἔζων. Quadratus, who wrote between 117 and 138, might quite well regard the years, *c.* 80-100, as belonging to his own time.

[3] It is not easy to fix the date of Aristides between these limits; yet the first ten years (138-147) are the more likely.

[4] *The Apology of Aristides* (Rendel Harris and Armitage Robinson), in the Cambridge *Texts and Studies*, vol. i. (1891). The opening portion was first discovered in Armenian; then the whole text in a Syriac manuscript at Mount Sinai; and finally, the original Greek text was recognised in a composition published a long time ago, the Legend of Barlaam and Josaphat. (Boissonnade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. iv., p. 239-255; Migne, *P. G.*, vol. xcvi., p. 1108-1124; Ἐγὼ, βασιλεῦ, προνοίᾳ Θεοῦ . . .)

barbarians, Greeks, Jews, and Christians, naturally much to the advantage of the latter, with a eulogy on their morals and charity. He hints at calumnies, but gives no details. Nor is there any protest against legislation entailing persecution. The author comes forward himself at once, describes to the prince the impression the spectacle of the world made upon him, and the conclusions which he drew from it, as to the nature of God, the worship which is His due, and that which is in fact rendered to Him, by various classes of men. This classification recalls that in the "Preaching of Peter."[1] For further information Aristides refers the emperor to the Christian books.

Justin is far better known than Aristides. Yet only a part even of his apologetic writings are extant. But we have the Apologies, or rather the Apology he addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, about 152 A.D. Like Aristides, Justin was a philosopher, that is a citizen of the world, travelling from town to town, with his short cloak and freedom of speech. A native of Neapolis[2] in Palestine, in the land of Samaria, he passed from one school to another. The Platonists held him for a time; but he did not find among them complete rest for his soul. He had happened to be present at several martyrdoms which moved him profoundly, and led him to reflect on the convictions which led to such constancy. In this frame of mind, a conversation with a mysterious old man led to his conversion. When he became a Christian, he changed nothing in his outward appearance as a philosopher, nor his manner of life; they gave him opportunities for gaining the ear of the public, and for proclaiming the Gospel teaching which he at once made it his mission to spread and defend. He became a Christian about 133 A.D., no doubt at Ephesus, where shortly afterwards he had (*c.* 135 A.D.) a dialogue with a learned Jew, called Trypho. Afterwards he came to Rome, and stayed some time there. He wrote a great deal, not only

[1] See above, p. 109.

[2] Now Nablous, near the site of the ancient Sichem.

against external enemies,[1] but also against the heretical schools which were then in full swing.[2]

His Apology is addressed to the Emperor[3] Antoninus Augustus, to the princes Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, to the Senate, and to the Roman people: "On behalf of those whom the whole human race hates and persecutes, Justin, the son of Priscus, and grandson of Bracchius, a native of Flavia Neapolis in Syria-Palestine, and one of them, presents this address and petition." He protests at once (4-12) that the Christians ought not to be persecuted for the name they bear, but for their crimes, if they have committed any. He then disposes of the calumnies against them (13-67), and after having shown what they are not, he sets forth what they actually are. He depicts Christian morals, and explains the meaning of their assemblies, and much calumniated mysteries, baptism and the Eucharist. Why, he asks, again and again, why all this hatred, these slanders, these persecutions? According to him, it is all the work of malicious demons. To them he attributes not only the hostile attitude of public opinion and the government, but also the divisions among Christians brought about by heretics, like Simon, Menander, and Marcion. Before Christ these malignant demons had molested the wise men of old, who, inspired by the Word of God (λόγος σπερματικός), were in some respects Christians themselves, like Heraclitus, and above all Socrates, who, like Christ and the Christians, had been

[1] Eusebius (iv. 18) speaks of two writings, "To the Greeks," Πρὸς Ἕλληνας, in one of which, amongst other things, the nature of demons was dealt with — the other bore the special title of "Refutation," Ἔλεγχος. In a third, "On the Sovereignty of God," he establishes the Divine Unity both on the Holy Scriptures and the books of the Greeks. Finally, another book set forth various questions as to the soul, giving the solutions of philosophers, and promising to give his own later on.

[2] We know, by name only, of a book against all heresies (*Apol.* i. 26), and of another against Marcion (Irenæus IV., vi. 2). Perhaps they were parts of one work.

[3] This title, incorrectly handed down, has led to much discussion, which is given or epitomised in Harnack's *Chronologie*, p. 279 *et seq.*

put to death on a charge of atheism and hostility to the gods of the State.[1]

He writes roughly and incorrectly and without much regard to order, after the manner of the philosophers of the day. He is also defective on the critical side. Justin, referring to the history of the Septuagint, makes Herod a contemporary of Ptolemy Philadelphus, an anachronism of two hundred years. He had seen on the island in the Tiber, a dedicatory inscription in honour of the god Semo Sancus; from this he inferred that Simon Magus, in whom he took special interest, had been in Rome, and that the State had accorded him divine honours.

To his Apology, Justin appended a copy of the rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus,[2] which may have come into his hands at Ephesus. Influenced by the impression made by three summary condemnations, which the prefect Urbicus pronounced against Christians, he shortly afterwards wrote what is known as his second Apology.[3] He appeals here directly to Roman public opinion, protesting anew against unjustifiable severities, and replying to various criticisms.

Justin did not confine himself to writing. He was much given to speaking in places of public assembly. He was a mark for the malignant abuse of the philosophers, and had no hesitation in repaying them in kind, calling them in his turn gluttons and liars. A cynic, named Crescens,[4] who was given to railing against Christians, had

[1] Justin never mentions Epictetus. It is difficult to believe that he had never heard of him, but he may not have known the writings which enlighten us about this philosopher "Saint." One would like to know whether Justin would have applied to him also his characterization of the ancient sages. Of the *Thoughts* of Marcus Aurelius, he clearly had no knowledge.

[2] See above, p. 83.

[3] Eusebius (iv. 18) speaks of two Apologies of Justin, addressed one to Antoninus, the other to Marcus Aurelius. He has no doubt mistaken the Supplement to the one only Apology for a separate Apology. At any rate this Supplement cannot have been written in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, for Urbicus, the Prefect of Rome mentioned there, was Prefect under Antoninus, before 160 A.D.

[4] For Crescens, see *Apol.* ii. 3, ii.; Tatian, *Oratio*, p. 157.

a special encounter with him. In a public discussion between the two, taken down in writing, Crescens did not get the best of it. The simple-minded Justin would have liked the emperors to read the report. But Crescens had other weapons at his command, and Justin soon perceived that his enemy was aiming at his death; an object not difficult to attain.

After the Apology, Justin wrote his Dialogue with Trypho.[1] Here he takes up again and, no doubt, amplifies his discussion with a Jew at Ephesus, twenty years back. This work is of great value in the history of Christian and Jewish controversy, and of the beginning of Christian theology.[2]

A few years later, Marcus Aurelius being then sole emperor (169-177), two Apologies were addressed to him by the Asiatic bishops, Melito of Sardis and Apollinaris of Hierapolis. Persecution had sprung up again in their province; the officials had apparently received new and stringent instructions. We have but a few fragments, preserved by Eusebius,[3] of the Apology of Melito, in which the bishop discusses the idea that Christianity, born under Augustus, was in effect contemporaneous with the empire and the peace of Rome, and that only Nero and Domitian, bad emperors, enemies to the common weal, had ever been persecutors of Christianity. The new religion in fact brings good fortune to the empire, and Melito almost insinuates that mutual understanding would be possible. This was a very optimistic view to take at that time. Yet it was that destined to prevail.

Of the Apology of Apollinaris nothing is known, unless the passage from his writings where Eusebius[4] found the reference to the Thundering Legion, formed a part of it.

[1] It is not known where the Dialogue was written, but probably not in Rome.

[2] To complete the list of Justin's works his *Psaltes*, alluded to by Eusebius, must be mentioned. As is well known, Apocryphal writings were attributed to the Martyr-Philosopher.

[3] *H. E.* iv. 26, §§ 6-11.

[4] v. 5.

A third Apology, also the work of an Asiatic, Miltiades, appears to be of this time.[1]

We have, on the other hand, the entire text of a fourth work of a similar nature, the Apology of Athenagoras,[2] addressed to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (177-180 A.D.). Athenagoras, like Aristides, was an Athenian philosopher. He writes on the usual theme of the Apologies in a better style, and with more method than does Justin. Christians are not what people think them. They reject idolatry and polytheism no doubt, but do not the best and wisest philosophers do so also? With their reasonable belief in the Unity of God, the doctrine of the Word and the Holy Spirit can be easily harmonized. The atrocities imputed to them are abominable slanders, their morality on the contrary is pure, even austere. Why should men who believe and live thus be subjected to torture and death?

In fact, matters were becoming very serious for the Christians. There was good reason for the multiplication of Apologies under Marcus Aurelius. That wise emperor did not understand Christianity. To him it seemed inconceivable that such sects could be worth study, or that he could be expected to alter the laws of the empire for them. In vain the Christians tried to get the ear of the philosopher; they found they were dealing with a statesman who was all the more inflexible because he was so conscientious. Besides, the calamities which overshadowed this reign added fuel to the hatred of the populace, long exasperated by the continued progress of Christianity. Melito speaks of new decrees (*καινὰ δόγματα*) as causing much suffering in Asia; and Athenagoras bears witness that in Greece also the persecution had become intolerable. At this moment, in the last years of Marcus Aurelius, with the memorable scenes at Lyons and Carthage (Martyrs of Scilli), we get our first glimpse of Christianity in Gaul and Africa.

Peace returned after the death of Marcus Aurelius.

[1] Eusebius (v. 17) says it was addressed, *πρὸς τοὺς κοσμικοὺς ἄρχοντας*.

[2] Eusebius does not mention it.

His son Commodus was one of the worst emperors Rome had ever known, but at least he did not ill-treat the Christians.

This, however, was no reason why the Christians should interrupt the flow of their apologetic literature. Public opinion was far more adverse to them than were the emperors; it must be enlightened before it could be modified. And this the Christians fully realised. The Apologies addressed to the Emperors Hadrian, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius were far from representing their whole line of defence. We have either the texts or bibliographical lists, of a whole library of treatises "To the Greeks," Πρὸς Ἕλληνας. Even apart from his "Apologies" Justin was pre-eminent in this department.[1] Tatian also, one of his disciples, and like him a great traveller, left an "Oration to the Greeks." There are also three books of the same kind by Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, addressed to a certain Autolycus. The treatise of Athenagoras, on the resurrection of the body, is but an appendix to his Apology. Melito, Miltiades, and Apollinaris all also devoted their energies to the same end.[2] Other books, all on the same subject, have come down either without any author's name, or with spurious attributions, like the Epistle to Diognetus, and the three treatises, "Address to the Greeks," the "Exhortation to the Greeks," (λόγος παραινετικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας); and "On the Monarchy,"[3] falsely attributed to Justin.

Of these, we will but notice the Epistle to Diognetus,

[1] See p. 151, note 2, of this volume.

[2] Melito, Περὶ ἀληθείας; Apollinaris, a work in two books with the same title; five books, πρὸς Ἕλληνας; his περὶ εὐσεβείας, mentioned by Photius, must be identical with the Apology; Miltiades, Πρὸς Ἕλληνας, in two books. Eusebius iv. 26, 27; v. 17. These are all lost.

[3] Their titles correspond more or less with those of the lost books of Justin, but they certainly are not by him. The "Address to the Greeks" is an account of the motives which led the author to Christianity. An author of the 3rd century, a certain Ambrosius, made a rather free paraphrase of it, which exists in a Syriac version. (Cureton, *Spicil. syr.*, 1885); *cf.* Harnack, in the *Sitzungsb.* of Berlin, 1896, p. 627.

an admirable example of style, of which the charm and conciliatory tone in no way weaken its persuasive warmth; and the oration of Tatian, distinguished by very different characteristics. Tatian, instead of calling his plea an "Oration to the Greeks," should have entitled it "Invective against the Greeks." It betrayed both contempt and anger. Tatian, who was born beyond the bounds of the empire, in a land where Syriac was spoken, had indeed been through the schools of Greece, and had dabbled in Western culture. But it was to him as a foreign land, for which he felt neither respect nor affection. Far from venerating the sages of old, like Justin, and seeing analogies in their writings with those of the Prophets, Tatian scoffs at Hellenism as a whole—worship and doctrines, poets and philosophers. He inaugurated the school of virulent apologists, who employ abuse as a means of conversion. A forerunner of Tertullian, he, like Tertullian, finally broke with the Church. But this was later. When he wrote his "Oration," Justin was still alive, and the difference in their views does not appear to have caused any division between them.

It is very difficult to gauge the effect of all this apologetic literature. It does not seem to have stopped the application of repressive laws. Possibly it may have modified the views of men of letters, here and there. But their influence must not be exaggerated, and at the bottom the Church was enabled to survive the laws of persecution, and to triumph over indifference, contempt, and slander, not by intellect nor by apologetics, but by the spiritual power within, visibly shining forth in the virtue, the charity, and the ardent faith of Christians of the heroic age. This it was which drew men to Christ; this it was that had won the apologists themselves; and this finally drew the Romans to adore a crucified Jew, and led Greek minds to accept dogmas like that of the resurrection.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHURCH IN ROME FROM NERO TO COMMODUS

Aristocratic Jews. Conversions amongst the patricians. Christians of the Flavian family. Clement, and his letter to the Corinthian Church. Ignatius in Rome. The Shepherd of Hermas. Penitence. Christology of Hermas. The first Popes. Heretics in Rome. Visits of Polycarp and Hegesippus. Martyrs. Bishop Soter. The Gnostic Schools of the time of Marcus Aurelius. Evolution of Marcionism. Apelles. The Thundering Legion. The martyrdom of Apollonius.

THE Christian community in Rome soon re-organized itself after the terrible experiences of the year 64. And ere long, those who survived the massacre witnessed the downfall of the odious persecutor Nero (68 A.D.). The fall of Jerusalem, which had risen against the empire, followed two years later, after a protracted siege; the Temple was destroyed by fire, and, soon afterwards, the spoils of the Holy Places were borne in triumph through the streets of Rome, behind the car of the conquerors, Vespasian and Titus.

The downfall of Israel brought an enormous number of Jewish prisoners to Rome. Assuredly no leaning towards Christianity was to be expected from such fanatics. But even before the end of the war, a new party, a whole group of renegade Jews, had formed, whose rich and influential representatives gathered round the reigning house. Some of the Herodian family still remained. Berenice was long in high favour with Titus. Josephus formed part of this distinguished group, when he wrote the history of his nation,

presenting it under the aspect most congenial to the conquerors. This much increased Jewish influence, not, of course, the influence of political Judaism, which had just been finally swept away, but of philosophical and religious Judaism. In spite of the late insurrection, the suppression of which was commemorated by the Arch of Titus, it was no longer considered bad form to show sympathy for the court-favoured Jews, to honour their religion, and even to some extent to practise it. Now, as formerly, after Pompey's victory, conquered Judea exercised a compelling influence over her conquerors. But not for long, for with the Flavian dynasty, and even soon after the death of Titus, the imperial favour passed away from these princely or cultivated Jewish magnates. Nevertheless, this passing affectation of Jewish ways could not but add to the undermining influence long exercised by Eastern monotheism, on the old pagan faiths, in the highest Roman society. From this time onward—the statement is justified by several known facts—Christianity began to make way among the great patrician families. Not only foreigners, insignificant folk, slaves, or officials of the imperial household, but members of the families of the Pomponii, the Acilii, even of the Flavii, less illustrious, but a reigning house, began to turn to Christ. Even under Nero a great lady, Pomponia Graecina,[1] had attracted attention by her grave and retired life. She was accused of foreign superstition; but her husband, A. Plautius, claiming as head of the family the right to try her, pronounced her innocent, and she lived until Domitian's reign. She was probably a Christian. M'. Acilius Glabrio, consul in 91, and Flavius Clemens, first cousin of Domitian, consul in 95, were also—the latter certainly, and the other very probably—members of the Church in Rome. The most ancient burying-place devoted exclusively to the use of the Christian community in Rome, the cemetery of

[1] Tacitus, *Ann.* xiii. 32; Christian inscriptions of the 3rd century mention *Pomponii Bassi*, and even a *Pomponius Graecinus* (De Rossi, *Roma sott.*, vol. ii., p. 281, 362).

Priscilla, was in a villa of the Acilii, on the Via Salaria[1] On the Via Ardeatina, the cemetery of Domitilla was on ground belonging to Flavia Domitilla, wife of the Consul Clemens.[2] The Christianity of these patricians was therefore not merely platonic; they took their part in the practical life of the community, and supplied their wants. Before long the patricians also took their place among the martyrs. The gloomy and suspicious tyrant Domitian did not persecute only philosophers or politicians who still regretted the liberty of old days, or retained some regard for their own dignity. This austere censor, and vigilant guardian of the old traditions of Roman life, discovered that they were seriously threatened by the invasion of Jewish and Christian customs. Clemens and his wife, Flavia Domitilla, "were charged with atheism, an accusation for which many who affected Jewish ways suffered, some death, others confiscation of goods."[3]

The consul was executed in the very year of his consulship (95); Flavia Domitilla was exiled to the island of Pandataria; another Flavia Domitilla, their niece, was interned in the island of Pontia.[4] Domitian, however, recognized two of the sons of Clemens as his heirs-presumptive, giving them the names of Vespasian and Domitian, and was having them educated by the distinguished

[1] De Rossi, *Bull.* 1889, 1890.

[2] *C. I. L.*, vol. vi., note 16246; *cf.* 948 and 8942.

[3] Dio Cassius, lxvii. 14; *cf.* Suetonius, *Domitian* 15.

[4] According to the chronographer Bruttius, Eusebius, in his chronicle, *ad ann. Abr.* 2110 (cf. *H. E.* iii. 18) speaks of this other Flavia Domitilla, the daughter of a sister of the consul, who was exiled to the Isle of Pontia. As he does not mention the exile of the consul and his wife, we might be inclined to fear that this Flavia Domitilla had been confused with the other. The two islands, however, are quite distinct, and St Jerome, who visited Pontia, had seen there the rooms which had been occupied by "the most illustrious of women," exiled for the faith, under Domitian. The legend of the Saints, Nereus and Achilleus (brothers. See Roman Breviary, 12th May) implies that this Domitilla was martyred and buried at Terracina. I think that Tillemont (*Hist. eccl.*, vol. ii., p. 224); De Rossi (*Bull.*, 1875, p. 72-77), and Achelis (*Texte und Unt.*, vol. xi. (2), p. 49), are right in distinguishing two Flavia Domitillas.

rhetorician Quintilian, when he himself was assassinated (96 A.D.). Thus ended the imperial destiny of the Flavian house, which, however, still continued to exist, some of its members even holding office. The Christian tradition was kept up in the family of the martyred consul. He was a son of Vespasian's eldest brother Flavius Sabinus, who perished in 69, in the conflict between the partisans of his brother and those of Vitellius, Prefect of Rome, in Nero's day. He must have witnessed in 64 the burning of the city, and the massacre of the Christians. Probably they made a lasting impression on him. The gentleness, moderation, and horror of bloodshed, for which he was remarkable in his later years, led to his being accused of cowardice.[1]

The Christians of the Flavian family had their burying-place on the Via Ardeatina; the monumental gateway leading to it, and a spacious gallery adorned with very ancient frescoes, have been discovered. Here, no doubt, were buried the Martyr-Consul, and the earliest members of his family. A little farther the Greek epitaph of a Flavius Sabinus and his sister Titiana was found, and then a fragment of inscription, which may have indicated a general burying-place of the Flavii: (*sepulc*) *rum* (*flavi*) *orum.*[2]

All that we know of these illustrious converts comes from secular authors, confirmed by inscriptions and other monuments in the Catacombs.[3] Written testimony from Christian sources is entirely wanting. In those very early times, the Christian community in Rome must have contained more than one witness of the first days; the authority of these companions or disciples of the Apostles was evidently as great as was that of the *presbyteri* in

[1] "Mitem virum, abhorrere a sanguine et caedibus; . . . . in fine vitae alii segnem, multi moderatum et civium sanguinis parcum credidere" (Tacitus, *Hist.* iii. 65, 75).

[2] De Rossi, *Bull.*, 1865, p. 33-47; 1874, p. 17; 1875, p. 64.

[3] The martyrdom of the Saints Nereus and Achilleus, a Christian romance of the 5th century, introduces Flavia Domitilla (the exile to Pontia). Also the Consul Clemens and his namesake the bishop. But there is nothing really historical in all this.

Asia. They were a support to primitive tradition, a shelter to the dawn of the hierarchy. It is possible also that some books of the New Testament, such as the Gospels of Mark and Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, the first Epistle of St Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, may have originated in Rome, either before or after the fall of Jerusalem, and St Paul's Epistles may have been first collected there. But of all this we have no certain evidence.[1]

With the letter of St Clement, we emerge into the light of day. Towards the end of Domitian's reign, trouble had arisen in the Church of Corinth. A party of the younger Christians set up an opposition to the elders of the community; they had turned out several of the college of presbyters appointed either "by the Apostles, or by wise men (ἐλλόγιμοι) after their day with the consent of the whole Church." The noise of these dissensions had penetrated beyond the Church, and its good name suffered in consequence.[2] The Church of Rome, on hearing of this, thought it right to intervene. Sudden and repeated calamities had just befallen it, but as soon as possible three envoys were sent to Corinth. Claudius Ephebus, Valerius Bito, and Fortunatus, from their youth up to their present advanced age had lived as examples to the Roman Church. Christians of such long standing would no doubt have known the apostles. They were to testify, at Corinth, to the feelings and hopes of the Romans. They were, moreover, entrusted with a letter from the Church in Rome.[3] We know who wrote it. It was Clement the Bishop, whose name occurs third after the apostles, in the best authenticated episcopal catalogues.

Clement was identified by Origen[4] with the person of the

[1] Except the First Epistle of St Peter. See above, p. 46, note 3.

[2] Clem. i. 1, 2, 44, 47.

[3] "The Church of God, which dwells in Rome to the Church of God which dwells in Corinth . . ."

[4] *In Joh.* i. 29, a doubtful identification.

same name, who was associated with St Paul in the evangelization of Philippi.[1] He also was certainly old enough to have seen and talked with the apostles, as St Irenæus says.[2] But he could hardly have belonged to the family of the consul, Flavius Clemens. He had, however, no doubt, a deep regard for everything Roman; he speaks of *our* princes, the soldiers under *our* generals; the military discipline filled him with admiration. But his familiarity with the Holy Scriptures, with the Old Testament, and even with the New (the Epistles of St Paul, St Peter, St James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews) rather suggests a Jewish education. Perhaps he was a freed-man of the Flavian family. However this may be, his letter is an admirable testimony to the wise and practical spirit animating Roman piety, even in those remote days. First he dwells on the unseemliness of discord and strife (3-6), then he counsels obedience to the Will of God (7-12), points to the greatness of the reward promised to simple and righteous souls (23-26) and the need for order in the Church. He takes his illustrations from the discipline of the Roman armies, and from the sacerdotal hierarchy of the Old Testament (37-42). Then turning to the New Covenant, the author points out that the Ministry of the Church comes from the apostles and Jesus Christ, that its authority is lawful and to be obeyed (42-47). He entreats the Corinthians to repent, to return to peace and order, and to submit to salutary chastisement; if certain people are an obstacle to peace, they must not shrink from exiling them. The Church should pray for those who are seditious (48-58). With rather an abrupt transition, he at once adds example to precept, formulating (59-61) a long prayer, which has but a remote connection with the Corinthian troubles. We may see in it, not perhaps the solemn formula of the Roman liturgy at the end of the 1st century, but a specimen of the way Eucharistic prayer was developed by the leaders of the Christian assemblies.

He ends his letter with a reminder of the exhortations already given, and with salutations. From end to end, it

[1] Philippians iv. 3. [2] *Haer.* iii. 3.

is inspired by a fine simplicity of faith and pious wisdom. It contains none of the astounding peculiarities of some ancient writers, only the common Christianity expressed with perfect good sense. There is not even any anxiety as to heresy or schism. In the Roman Church, at that moment, perfect peace reigned.

The mission from Rome apparently met with success. Seventy years later, in the days of Bishop Dionysius,[1] the letter of Clement was amongst the books read by the Corinthians side by side with the Holy Scriptures, in their Sunday assemblies. And, moreover, it was in one of the most ancient manuscripts of the Greek Bible, that Clement's letter first became known to us.[2] Only a few years after it was written St Polycarp possessed it, and treated it as an apostolical letter.

Twenty years after the Corinthian dissensions and St Clement's letter, the Romans[3] were edified by the presence and the martyrdom of St Ignatius of Antioch. On this event a letter from the martyr himself, written from Asia to the Romans, is our only source of information. The theme of this letter is unique. The Confessor for the Faith, condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, and sent from Syria to Rome for the purpose, fears lest his Roman brethren should impede his attainment of the object of his journey. He entreats them very earnestly not to hinder his martyrdom. It seems that they could have saved him, though we cannot very well see how.[4] He says: "Suffer me to be the prey of the beasts; through them I shall reach God. I am the wheat of God; suffer me to be

[1] Eus. iv. 23, § 11.

[2] The MS. A. of the 5th century in the British Museum. Another MS. (11th cent.) has been since discovered, as well as a Syriac and a Latin version. MS. A. has a great gap near the end of the letter.

[3] There are many Acts of the martyrdom of St Ignatius. But none have any historical value.

[4] It is very improbable that they would have been able to obtain his pardon; at most they might have helped him to escape. But the leaders at least would hardly think of such a thing, as they would take the same view of martyrdom, and its glories, as did Ignatius.

ground by the teeth of beasts, to become the white bread of Christ. Rather encourage the wild beasts that they may be my grave, and leave nothing of my body; and thus my burial will be no burden to anyone. . . . I do not command you as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles: I am only a condemned criminal. They were free: I am a slave to this hour; but if I die, I become the freeman of Jesus Christ; in Him I shall rise again free."

This pathetic letter not only testifies to the longing for martyrdom which consumed Ignatius, but also to the Bishop of Antioch's respect for the great Roman Church. It opens with a long and formal salutation, in which, more than in his other letters, he piles up complimentary phrases: "The Church which presides in the place of the Roman land[1] . . . the Church which presides in the Agape (or in charity)." Ignatius evidently regards the Church in Rome as presiding over the other churches, and also over the Christian brotherhood.

He obtained from Rome what he wished, liberty to be a martyr. No doubt, it was in the recently erected[2] Coliseum, that the "wheat of God" was ground by the wild beasts. But his burial was not left to them. Some of his disciples had followed to Rome,[3] to see him die; they gathered up the fragments of his body, and bore them back to Syria.[4]

The Romans also had a Martyr-Bishop, Telesphorus, who, says St Irenæus,[5] died gloriously under Hadrian (v. 135), but he gives us no details.

The contemporaries of Clement, Ignatius, and Telesphorus also knew the prophet Hermas, and heard his communication to the congregation of the visions and instructions, which he afterwards combined in his celebrated book, *The Shepherd*.

[1] ἥτις προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων . . . προκαθημένη τῆς ἀγάπης.

[2] It was opened 80 A.D. [3] *Rom.* 9.

[4] The tomb of St Ignatius was in a cemetery outside the Daphne gate. Under Theodosius II. (408-450) the Temple of Fortune (Τυχαῖον) in Antioch was converted into a church and dedicated to him. Thither his remains were solemnly transferred. (Evagr. *H. E.* i. 16.)

[5] *Haer.* iii. 3, ὃς ἐνδόξως ἐμαρτύρησεν.

In the book of Hermas, so unusual in its form, we have a precious sample of what might be termed prophetic literature, such as may have emanated from the prophets of the New Testament. It was finished, in its present form, whilst the author's brother, Bishop Pius, presided over the See of Rome,[1] *i.e.* about 140 A.D. But it had gone through several editions. The earliest[2] must go back to the time of Trajan and the episcopate of Clement.

Hermas was a Roman Christian, a freedman and a rural proprietor, married, and the father of a rather unsatisfactory family. He was never, however, so absorbed by his work in the fields nor were his domestic trials so great, but that his mind was continually fixed upon the Christian hope, and incessantly concerned for his own salvation and that of others. He was a simple soul, of limited culture. Like all Christians of his day, he was familiar, to a certain extent, with the Old Testament, and several books of the New. The only book, however, which he actually quotes is apocryphal.[3] Urged by some inner force to communicate to others his views on moral reform, he expresses them as revelations. In the first and earliest part of his book, the Visions, he converses with a woman who represents the Church. In the two other parts, the Precepts (*Mandata*) and the Parables (*Similitudines*), the Seer is another imaginary person, the Shepherd from whom the book takes its definite title.

Whether it is the "Shepherd" or the Church which speaks, whether the thought is expressed directly, or wrapped in symbolic form, one idea constantly asserts itself. The faithful, and the author, first of all are far from being what they should be, or have promised to

[1] Muratorian Canon.

[2] *Visio* ii. This is roughly according to Harnack's conclusions, *Chronologie*, p. 257 *et seq.* According to him, the prophecy of Hermas passed through the following phases; 1. *Vis.* ii. (the groundwork only); 2. *Vis.* i.-iii.; 3. *Vis.* i.-iv.; 4. *Vis.* v., the *Mandata* and the eight first *Similitudes;* this is *The Shepherd* proper; 5. Four first visions grouped with *The Shepherd*, and *Sim.* ix. added; 6. The same completed by *Sim.* x.

[3] *Eldad and Modad*, a book now lost.

be. There is a remedy; repentance. Hermas is charged to impress upon the Christian community that God pardons all who repent. He therefore preaches post-baptismal repentance as the apostles preached repentance, followed by baptism as a consecration. His is a second penitence, a second opportunity granted by God, before the final day of reckoning.

The interest of the book lies less in the main idea, than in the way it is worked out. Hermas' description of particular cases, and of the sinners' different circumstances, give us some notion of the inner life of the Roman Church[1] in the first half of the 2nd century.

At that time, under Trajan and Hadrian, the Christian communities were in a very precarious condition. In spite of the more lenient rescripts of these emperors, the disciples were incessantly harassed, brought up before the magistrates, and required to renounce their religion. If they obeyed they were at once released; if not, it meant death.

Confronted by this alternative, some had fallen away, and others were falling away every day. Already apostasy was a common scandal. There were degrees of guilt. Some simply apostatised for the sake of their worldly interests. Others added blasphemy to denial; they were not ashamed publicly to curse their God and their brethren. Some even went so far as to betray their fellows and denounce them. On the other hand, the Church gloried in many martyrs: not all, however, of equal merit. Some trembling at the prospect of suffering, hesitated to confess the faith, though at the last the voice of conscience prevailed and they shed their blood for their religion. Hermas distinguishes these from the more noble-hearted martyrs, whose hearts never failed a moment. Yet all are part of the mystical building which represents the Church of God; only the apostles come before these martyrs. And besides martyrs, he refers to confessors,

[1] One might even say, "Of the Whole Church," for there are but few local characteristics, and the favour the book met with everywhere indicates that it reflected ordinary conditions.

who had suffered for the Faith, without being called to shed their blood.

The Christian community, as a whole, led a tolerably upright life. But still imperfections, and even vices, called for correction. The pervading *cliquishness* led to dissension, back-biting, and malice. They clung too much also to this world's goods. For many, business obligations and social duties involved frequent association with the heathen, entailing serious danger. Men forgot the brotherhood of the Gospel, and held aloof from the common gatherings, dreading contact with the common folk, who, of course, formed the majority in the Christian congregation. Then faith suffered, and all but the name of Christian was gone. The remembrance of baptism was gradually lost in intercourse with the pagan world; the slightest temptation swept away their enfeebled faith, and on very flimsy pretexts they would deny it altogether. Some changed their religion even without persecution, attracted simply by the ingenious systems of philosophy, to which they had lightly lent an ear.

Even amongst the more steadfast believers, sad moral lapses occurred. The flesh is weak. But these momentary failings were not irreparable; penitence might expiate them. In the eyes of Hermas, wavering faith (*διψυχία*) was a graver danger; he often refers to that spiritual state in which the soul seems torn between assent and denial.

The clergy even were not above reproach. Deacons had proved unfaithful to the secular interests in their charge, appropriated to themselves money intended for widows and orphans: priests also were prone to unjust judgment, proud, negligent, and ambitious.

The book of Hermas is a great self-examination on the part of the Church in Rome. And all these grievous disclosures need not surprise us, for the character of the book demands that evil should be more prominent in it than good, the exception rather than the rule. But in spite of this, it is clear that, in the eyes of Hermas, the exemplary Christians, not the sinners, were in the majority. Thus, in Similitude VIII. the moral status of each Christian is

symbolised by a green willow wand which each has received from the angel of the Lord, and which, after an interval, has to be given back. Some return it withered, split or rotten; some, half withered, half green; some, two-thirds green; and so on. These different degrees of preservation correspond to degrees of moral delinquency. Now, the majority return their willow wands as green as they received them—that is, they had been faithful to their baptismal vows.

So also, if Hermas dwells, more than once, on dissensions in the presbytery, and on other shortcomings of leading ecclesiastics, he also knows many worthy of high commendation; he exalts their charity and hospitality; he places them in the apostolic company in the highest seats in his mystic tower.

In fact, the impression derived from this picture is, that though the Church, in these very early days, was not composed exclusively of saints, yet they formed the great majority. Hermas never alludes to Jews, and very seldom to pagans. His book is intended exclusively for the faithful: he has nothing to do with what is going on outside the Church. We have already seen his attitude to the dawning heresies. He does not look on them as definite systems, still less as organised sects, rivals of the main body. He knew only a few prating fools who went about sowing strange doctrines, always insisting on their knowledge, but having in fact no understanding. Hermas, anxious above all for morality, reproaches them with dissuading sinners from repentance. He wonders what will be the fate of these misguided teachers. He does not despair of their salvation: some have already returned to the right way, have even become conspicuous for good deeds; others will also return, at least so he hopes.

Repentance, as Hermas preaches it, is a means of expiating post-baptismal sin. Some taught that after baptism, no remission was possible. This is not his view. Even after baptism forgiveness is available for sin, even for the worst of sins; but this second conversion must be serious, life must not pass in recurring alternations of sin

and repentance.[1] Hermas does not mention any of the external forms of repentance found in use soon after his time. He speaks neither of confession nor absolution. As to works of expiation, he no doubt recognises them, but he insists on their futility unless accompanied by sincere conversion of heart. He refers to the practice of public fasts, observed by the whole community — the stations, as they were called—and he criticises, not the institution itself, nor fasting in general, but the vain trust which some men had in this practice. A fast demands, first and foremost, moral reform, strict observance of the law of God, and then the practice of charity. On fast days he allows bread and water alone; the saving on the usual daily disbursement goes to the poor.

Hermas with his simple nature, and absorbing care for moral reform, was not the man to indulge in theological speculation. But *The Shepherd* does raise a few difficulties of this nature. A glimpse of his conception of the Redemption, the Trinity, and the Incarnation is given us in Similitude V., and in a curious connection. The prophet is by way of inculcating the value of works of supererogation, a subject which would not, on the face of it, appear to lead up to metaphysical disquisitions. However, that is what occurs. *The Shepherd* begins with a parable. A man has an estate and many servants. Part of his land he sets apart as a vineyard, then, choosing out one of his servants, he charges him to prop up the vine. The servant does more than he was commanded: not only does he fix the props for the vine, but he clears away the weeds. The master is much pleased. Having taken counsel with his son and his friends, he announces that the good servant shall be admitted to a share of the inheritance with his son. The son, having given a feast, sends a share to the good

[1] *Mand.* iv. 3; *Sim.* viii. 6. Hermas again is not very dogmatic about backsliders: "This man will not pull through; it will be difficult for him to save his soul." If, at times, he seems to shut out from forgiveness men guilty of some sin, it is because they turn away from repentance.

servant, who in his turn shares it with his fellow-servants, and thus gains fresh praise.

So much for the parable. Now for the explanation. The estate is the world; the master is God, Creator of all; the vineyard is the Church, the company of the elect, in all ages; the master's son is the Holy Spirit;[1] the servant is Jesus Christ; the friends and advisers are the six higher angels. Jesus Christ's work is symbolized by three actions—the staking of the vine, the destruction of the weeds, and the sharing of the feast. The stakes for the vine are the lower angels whom the Saviour has set to guard the Church; the destruction of the weeds is redemption, which has rooted out sin; and sharing the food stands for preaching the Gospel.

Here we have, before the Incarnation, but two Divine Persons, God and the Holy Spirit, whose relations are represented as those of father and son. The Holy Spirit is therefore identified with the Word,[2] the pre-existent Christ. The same idea recurs a little further on: "The pre-existent Holy Spirit created all things, and God caused it to dwell in a body of flesh chosen by Himself. This flesh, in which dwelt the Holy Spirit, served the Spirit well in all purity and in all sanctity, without ever inflicting the least stain upon it. After the flesh had thus conducted itself so well and chastely, after it had assisted the Spirit and worked in all things with it, always showing itself to be strong and courageous, God admitted it to share with the Holy Spirit. . . . He therefore consulted His son and His glorious angels, in order that this flesh, which had served the Spirit without any cause for reproach, might obtain a place of habitation, and might not lose the reward of its services. There is a reward for all flesh which, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, shall be found without stain."

[1] *Filius autem Spiritus sanctus est*, runs the old Latin version; these startling words have disappeared from the Greek text and the other Latin version.

[2] Hermas never employs either the term Word, nor that of Christ. Nor does the name of Jesus appear either in *The Shepherd*.

To sum up, the Trinity of Hermas appears to consist of God the Father, of a second Divine Person (Son of God, Holy Spirit), and finally of the Saviour, who, as the reward of his merits is raised to the Godhead. This view is the exact theological counterpart of the curious stories we have come across in the old traditionalists of Asia. It is astounding that men like John the Elder and his kind could tell such fantastic tales; and not less surprising that the Roman prophet should go so far astray in his theology. But still, that part of his theory which is questionable is not very prominent. What first attracts attention are his dissertations on the value of good works and on moral purity. These are based upon the always appropriate example of the Saviour. The features, which are not easy to fit in satisfactorily, appear only in the background, and seem not to have been noticed in old days. Throughout Christendom, in the 2nd century, *The Shepherd* was accepted as a book of high religious authority, and read in the Church assemblies together with the Holy Scriptures, though not as on an equality with them. Gradually, however, its authority diminished: precisians, like Tertullian, found fault with its sympathy for sinners; cultivated men were startled by its eccentric style and the strange incidents in the visions.[1] The Arians quoted Hermas' celebrated statement of the Divine Unity.[2] But this would hardly damage him, and St Athanasius, following Clement of Alexandria and Origen, holds *The Shepherd* in high esteem, and employs it for the moral instruction of catechumens. Like Clement, Hermas had the honour of being included in a manuscript of the Bible, and is found at the end of the celebrated *codex Sinaiticus.*

[1] St Jerome (in Habakkuk i. 14) finds fault with Hermas' description (*liber ille apocryphus stultitiae condemnandus*) of the angel Thegri, whom he set over the (*Vis.* iv. 2) wild beasts. St Ambrose and St Augustine never allude to him; Prosper of Aquitaine, when Cassian quoted him, objected that his book was of no authority (*Adv. Coll.* 13). According to St Jerome (*De viris ill.* 10) it was almost ignored by the Latins of his day. Yet two old Latin versions remain.

[2] *Mand.* i. *Cf.* Athanasius, *De decr. Nic.* 18; *ad Afros*, 5.

The Shepherd was, as I have already said, finished, and published in its final form, when Bishop Pius, brother of Hermas, occupied "the see of the city of Rome." Pius was the ninth "successor" of the apostles. Of his eight predecessors, whose sequence St Irenæus gives us, Clement alone is known by his letter; Telesphorus by his martyrdom. Of Linus and Anencletus, the first two on the list, there is nothing to say, except that Linus may be the person of that name mentioned in the Second Epistle to Timothy.[1] Clement's successors, Euaristus, Alexander, Xystus, are also unknown. After Telesphorus comes Hyginus, the predecessor of Pius. We have no other material for a chronological list of these bishops, except a list, of which the first edition may date from the time of the Emperor Commodus, and Pope Eleutherus, or a little earlier. Figures are given after each name.

These give a total of 125 years. Reckoning back from 189 A.D. when Eleutherus died, these 125 years bring us back exactly to the year 64, the supposed date of the martyrdom of St Peter. The chronology of the first popes would accordingly stand thus:

		A.D.		
Linus	12 years approximately	65	to	76
Anencletus	12 „ „	77	„	88
Clement	9 „ „	89	„	97
Euaristus	8 „ „	98	„	105
Alexander	10 „ „	106	„	115
Xystus	10 „ „	116	„	125
Telesphorus	11 „ „	126	„	136
Hyginus	4 „ „	137	„	140
Pius	15 „ „	141	„	155
Anicetus	11 „ „	156	„	166
Soter	8 „ „	167	„	174
Eleutherus	15 „ „	175	„	189

But these figures, even supposing they have been exactly transmitted, must be taken as round numbers arrived at by ignoring all fractions of years whether above or below the number given. We cannot therefore depend absolutely on the dates obtained from them. In the only instance where we can check the table it is erroneous.

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 21.

St Polycarp came to Rome and was received by Pope Anicetus A.D. 154 at the latest.

Whatever be the truth respecting this chronological table, the data as to the episcopal succession in Rome is of the greatest evidential value. Those successors of the apostles must clearly be regarded as assisted, in the government of the Church, by a college of priests who shared the rule of the Christian community, presided over its Church assemblies, judged disputants, and looked after the training and instruction of neophytes. Here, as elsewhere, deacons and deaconesses[1] attended specially to the distribution of alms. In the expressions of the time, the bishop does not always stand out very prominently from his college of assessors, nor were the clergy always differentiated from the rest of the congregation. Social life in those days being very intense, all that was done or said was the affair of the whole body, rather than of the leaders.

Towards the end of Hadrian's reign, in the time of Bishop Hyginus, we first hear of heresies being brought to Rome. Valentinus of Alexandria, Cerdo, and Marcion came and established themselves there, and tried, not only to disseminate their views in the congregations, but, as some witnesses testify, to get the government of the Church into their own hands. It is most unlikely that some, of those inventors of counterfeit religions, who swarmed in Syria and Asia, had not come from the East to Rome, long before this time. Hermas seems to have known some, and from what he says, their success was but slight. Valentinus with his subtle philosophy and method of interpretation, and his tendency to compromise, attracted more attention, and succeeded in founding a school. He made a long stay in Rome under Pius and Anicetus, the successors of Hyginus. Marcion arrived about the same time, and managed to retain his connection with the Church for some years, though he had once to produce a written defence of his faith. But this position could not be

[1] See the epitaph of a deaconess (a widow) Flavia Arcas (de Rossi, *Bull.*, 1886, p. 90; *cf.* my *Origines du culte chrétien*, p. 342, 3rd edition).

permanent, and 144 A.D. the final rupture took place, and a Marcionite community was set up in opposition to the main body of the Church. The Marcionites were at first very successful. The philosopher Justin was then in Rome, and he who spoke and wrote perpetually against the various prevalent heresies, specially attacked Marcion. But Marcion managed to hold his own. He was still in Rome, at the time of Anicetus, when the venerable Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna appeared there (154 A.D.). The object of his journey was to arrange with the Roman Church some thorny questions, especially that of Paschal observance, on which Asiatics and Romans were not in accord. It is easy to conceive the pious interest awakened by the sight of this famous old man, who had known the eye-witnesses of the Gospel, and had been taught by the apostles of Asia. Anicetus welcomed him eagerly, and desired Polycarp to preside in his stead, at the assemblies for worship. Polycarp's personality was in itself a living embodiment of Christian tradition, and his presence made a great impression on the schismatics; many, renouncing their heresies, returned to the main Church. One day he met Marcion, whom he had seen before in Asia. "Dost thou recognize me?" asked the heretic. "Yes," replied Polycarp, "I recognize the first-born of Satan."

Anicetus could not fall in with Polycarp's views on the Easter question; neither could he bring over Polycarp to the Roman use. But they did not fall out on this account, and the Asiatics who were settled in Rome, continued to receive the Eucharist with the local congregation in spite of this slight divergence. This had long been the accepted custom, ever since the episcopate of Xystus.[1] Polycarp parted on friendly terms from the Romans and their bishop. A few months later they learnt that Polycarp had sealed with his blood his long and worthy career.

There was, at this time, a great influx into Rome from all parts. From the Carpocratian School of Alexandria came a woman teacher named Marcellina, who gained

[1] Irenæus, *Haer.* iii. 3. (Greek version in Eus. iv. 4); letter to Victor, in Eus. v. 24.

many adherents. Among the followers of Marcion, one of his disciples named Apelles, stood out; he afterwards took the lead in a new development of the Marcionite doctrine. Justin, the ardent defender of the faith, was joined by another philosopher, Tatian, from far-off Assyria, who for awhile fought by his side against the Cynics. From Palestine came Hegesippus, a traveller much given to the study of doctrines and traditions. He could enlighten the Romans on many interesting details regarding the older Christians of his own land; and he, on his side, received from them, not only particulars as to the present state of their Church, but also as to earlier times. He seems to have carried back from Rome a catalogue of bishops,[1] ending with Anicetus; this list he lengthened himself, so as to include Eleutherus, in whose pontificate he published his recollections of his journey to Rome, where he had known Eleutherus, as a deacon under Anicetus.

Such was the Christian community of Rome at the end of Antoninus' reign. The whole of Christendom seemed with one accord to have sent thither its most characteristic figures: Polycarp, the patriarch of Asia; Marcion, the rugged sectarian of Pontus; Valentinus, the chief exponent of Alexandrian Gnosticism; the woman teacher, Marcellina; Hegesippus, the Judaic-Christian of Syria; Justin and Tatian, philosophers and apologists. It was a sort of microcosm, an epitome of the whole Christianity of the age. As we see them moving freely from place to place,

[1] Eus. iv. 22. The endless controversy on *διαδοχὴν ἐποιησάμην μέχρις Ἀνικήτου* is well known; the word *διαδοχήν* must have been substituted for the original *διατριβήν*, and the sense would then be: "I stayed (in Rome) until the time of Anicetus." Rufinus understood it thus. But Rufinus is given to misunderstanding. On the other hand, the *μέχρις Ἀνικήτου* is quite inexplicable. Hegesippus should have said that he arrived in Rome *ἐπὶ Πιοῦ* or *ἐπὶ Ὑγεινοῦ*. Now he does not say this in the immediate context, and it is not easy to see that he had said so before. On the other hand, the idea of the episcopal list is confirmed by the rest of the paragraph, which goes on: "And to Anicetus succeeded Soter, to Soter Eleutherius." This seems to indicate that the author had in mind a list commencing, naturally, at the very beginning, and ending with Bishop Anicetus. Still I own that the expression *διαδοχὴν ἐποιησάμην* is not satisfactory: something must have been lost.

discussing, quarrelling, teaching, and praying, it is difficult to believe that they were all outlaws. But so it was. They all lived with martyrdom hanging over their heads. Hermas and Justin speak of it continually; Marcion also; Polycarp and Justin will both die for the Faith. Certainly the Roman Empire never knew a better prince than Antoninus, who then reigned; nevertheless Christianity was under an interdict, and the magistrates, in Rome as elsewhere, continued to enforce the Law. The fine Temple, which the emperor had just built, at the foot of the Via Sacra, to his dead wife Faustina, was then in all the glory of its new marble. More than one procession of Christians must have defiled before it, on their way from the tribunals of the Forum to meet a martyr's death. But the only Roman martyrs of this period known to us, are those St Justin speaks of in his *Apology*,[1] Ptolemæus, Lucius, and a third whose name he does not mention, who were all executed by order of the prefect Urbicus.

Justin himself was in great danger: Crescens, the Cynic philosopher whom he handled so roughly, never lost sight of him. This was perhaps why he left Rome. At the beginning of Marcus Aurelius' reign he returned; and this time, though Crescens does not seem to have been actively concerned, Justin fell a victim to his zeal. He was arrested with other Christians, some of whom were neophytes converted by him. They were brought before the prefect Rusticus (163-167), who, having satisfied himself of their Christianity, had them scourged and beheaded. It was a motley crew that shared Justin's martyrdom. There was a woman named Charito, and five men: a Cappodocian, Euelpistus, a slave of the imperial house; a certain Hierax of Iconium; and three others, Chariton, Pæon, and Liberianus.[2]

[1] ii. 2.

[2] The Acts of the Martyrdom of St Justin and his companions have been preserved in the Byzantine collection of Metaphrastus. It is the only similar authentic document extant on the Martyrs of Rome. The many other accounts we have are but pious romances of no authority. They certainly contain interesting details as to places of burial, and the condition of the sanctuaries, in the 5th and 6th

Of all these old generations of the Roman Church, one most precious monumental memorial, and one only, remains. It is the primitive upper gallery in the catacomb of Priscilla. Their epitaphs may still be read there; they are brief, consisting of the names only, with sometimes the greeting *Pax tecum.* Here and there, a few archaic paintings decorate the chambers, where small groups may have met in funereal gatherings. Other burying-places of the same date are found in the south of Rome; later on they were absorbed in the catacombs known by the names of Pretextatus, Domitilla, and Callistus. But none of them is so large in extent, or so regular, as the galleries of Priscilla. The latter evidently represents the first common cemetery of the Roman Church.

About the time that St Justin died for the Faith he had so long defended, the guidance of the Roman Church passed from the hands of Anicetus into those of Soter. Of him, we know only that, like his predecessor Clement, he wrote a letter to the Church of Corinth. But the occasion for this letter was very different. The letter of Soter was sent with a gift of money, intended for the relief of the poor, and of the confessors condemned to the mines. Rich and charitable, the Roman Church gave gladly of her abundance to Christian communities in less easy circumstances. This was already a traditional custom, and was kept up even through the last persecutions. Soter's letter is not extant; it is known only from the reply of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth. Of this Eusebius has preserved some fragments.[1]

centuries, but that is all. Specially is it impossible to accept their chronology, or the names of emperors and prefects which they insert at random. I must also point out that the most ancient Roman Calendars (the series begins in the time of Constantine) never mention the martyrs of the 2nd century. This is because the custom of celebrating the anniversaries of the martyrs, and of the dead generally, did not obtain in Rome until the 3rd century. The epitaphs show this; the most ancient never record the day of death.

[1] *H. E.* iv. 23. Harnack thinks this letter of Soter may be identified with the Second Epistle of Clement. I am unable to share his view.

Around the main Church, heresy continued to spread. The Valentinian sect took shape. It had two famous representatives in Rome, Heracleon and Ptolemæus, the direct disciples of Valentinus. The first of these slightly modified the genesis of the æons, who, in the early system were always grouped in pairs. Heracleon formed the Pleroma into a monarchy, placing a single being at its head, without any consort. From him alone proceeded the first couple, and consequently all the others. Heracleon was a most copious writer. Clement of Alexandria and Origen often quote him. His most remarkable work is a commentary on the Gospel of St John.[1] As for Ptolemæus, St Irenæus specially opposed him and his followers; and the Valentinian Gnosticism is best known to us in the form which St Irenæus either preserved, or gave to it. A certain Mark, who had long been a difficulty in Asia, appears in the West, about the time of Marcus Aurelius. From St Irenæus, St Hippolytus, or Tertullian, we hear of others also: Secundus, Alexander, Colarbasus, and Theotinus; we do not know, and it would be of no interest if we did know, what modifications of the system they represented.

But it was not only as to doctrine that divisions arose; divergent views on ritual appeared before long. Ordinary baptism was sufficient for "psychics": but for the initiation of the "pneumatics," something further was required. This the more sensible opposed, on the ground that, Gnosticism being a purely spiritual religion, the regeneration of the initiated came simply by knowledge of the mystery. Others again brought the candidate, with great solemnity, into a nuptial chamber; a rite quite in keeping with the prevalent notions of the celestial Pleroma. The greater number, however, preferred a counterfeit of Christian initiation, as practised by the main body of the Church. They baptized, therefore, with water, pronouncing such formulas as: *In the name of the unknowable Father*

[1] The fragmentary remains of Heracleon are printed at the end of St Irenæus. *V.* Brooke's edition in the Cambridge *Texts and Studies*, vol. i., fasc. 4.

of all things, of the Truth, which is the mother of all, and of him who descended in Jesus (the æon Christ). They used also Hebrew terms:[1] *In the name of Hachamoth*, etc. The initiate replied: *I am fortified and redeemed; I have redeemed my soul*, etc. Those present exclaimed: *Peace be to all those on whom this name rests.* There was besides an unction with perfumed oil. Sometimes balm was mixed with the water; thus both parts of the sacrament were combined. This ceremony was called *Apolytrosis* or *redemption.* There was another for the dying, or the dead. They were given formulas, by the use of which in the other world they were to triumph over the inferior powers and the Demiurge; then abandoning to the first their material elements, and their vital soul (ψυχή) to the Demiurge, they would rise into the higher regions reserved for the spiritual soul (πνεῦμα).[2]

Marcion must have died about the same time as Polycarp and Justin. His fellow-schismatics called him[3] "most holy Master," and regarded him with the utmost veneration. They believed him to be with Christ and St Paul in heaven; the Saviour having Paul on His right hand, and Marcion on His left.[4] But this common consent, in venerating their Master, implied no agreement as to his doctrine, which, as we have seen, contained rather incompatible elements. This the Master was not much concerned about, but after his death his followers tried to reconcile them.[5] Marcionism started with an antithesis between the good God and the just God. In the hands of the metaphysicians this led before long to two first principles, both essential, and both essentially opposed. This teaching was that of Politus and Basilicus, two notable Marcionites, under Marcus Aurelius. The school of Syneros and Lucanus,[6] by making the lower god into two,

[1] St Irenæus transcribes these Hebrew formulas, and even translates them; but his translations are not to be implicitly trusted.

[2] *Haer.* i. 21. [3] Tertullian, *Praescr.* 20.

[4] Origen, *In Luc.* 25.

[5] See the curious text of Rhodo, in Eus. v. 13.

[6] Lucanus is not mentioned by Rhodo. See Pseudo-Tert. and Tertullian *De Resurr.* 2; *cf.* Epiphanius, *Haer.* 43.

a just god and a bad god, ended by acknowledging three first principles. This Trinitarian Marcionism eventually proved so successful that it quite eclipsed the original dualist form. In the 3rd and 4th centuries, the Marcionites are frequently represented as believing in three gods.[1]

But at this moment, the most conspicuous teacher in the sect was a certain Apelles, who endeavoured to do away with the latent, or avowed, dualism, and to get back to a single first principle. Apelles first lived with Marcion in Rome, and subsequently went to Alexandria,[2] whence long after he returned to Rome. Rhodo, who knew him personally, draws a curious portrait of him as a venerable old man, of a dignified habit of life. He had with him a clairvoyante named Philomena, whose hallucinations he collected in a book of Manifestations.[3] Rhodo, having drawn him into a discussion, tried to make him explain how he reconciled his doctrines with those of Marcion. But Apelles, soon wearying of a dispute which was not turning to his advantage, replied, "that it was useless to try to solve all these questions, that it was best for each to keep to his own particular belief, and that all who had faith in the Crucified would be saved, if they lived virtuously. As to proving that there was but one only first principle, he gladly renounced the attempt, he was satisfied with being convinced of it himself. Nothing was to be learnt from the Prophets, who vied with each other in contradictions and lies."[4]

Apelles' system of evolution excited Rhodo's most lively interest. "He recognises," says Rhodo, "a single first principle, as we do." Yet there are differences.

[1] Compare Dionysius of Rome, in Athanasius, *De decr. Nicaen.*, 26.

[2] Tertullian attributes his departure to friction with Marcion, about a woman. He also says that Philomena came to grief. In her ecstasies, she had communications with a child, who sometimes was Christ, and sometimes St Paul.

[3] Φανερώσεις. He wrote another book, *Syllogisms*, attacking Moses and the Prophets. Origen (*in Gen.* ii. 2) quotes a fragment of it. Other bits are given in the *De Paradiso* of St Ambrose. Cf. *Texte und Unt.* vi. (3), p. 111.

[4] Eusebius v. 13.

Thanks to St Epiphanius,[1] we have a summary of Apelles' system, which seems to be his own work: "There is but one good God, one first principle, one single ineffable Power. This one God, this one first principle, is not concerned with anything in our world. He created (ἐποίησε) another God, who then created all things—heaven, earth, and everything in the world. But this second God was not good (ἀπέβη δὲ οὐκ αγαθός), and the things made by him were not well made (ἀγαθῶς εἰργασμένα)." From a metaphysical point of view, this greatly resembles Arianism, with the addition of the Marcionite insistence on goodness as an essential incommunicable attribute of God.

Apelles also softened down the fundamental Docetism of Marcion. Jesus Christ was no phantom; he had a body, not derived from a human mother, but borrowed from the four elements. In this body, he was indeed crucified, and really appeared to his disciples after the resurrection. When he ascended he restored the elements of his body to Nature. Otherwise Apelles held to the teaching of his Master. By eliminating Docetism, he got rid of one of the most potent objections to Marcionism. As to his representing the author of the world as created by the supreme God, clearly that was inevitable, unless, following Politus and Basilicus, the existence of two co-eternal first principles was admitted. The relative position of the two parties among the Marcionites was very similar to that of the partizans of Arianism and consubstantialism,[2] later on, in the orthodox Church. In Marcionism, Apelles was a heretic, in the same way that Arius was in the Catholic Church.

Rhodo, Apelles' opponent, was an Asiatic, long established in Rome. There he had made acquaintance

[1] *Haer.* xliv. 2.

[2] For Apelles, see especially what his contemporary, Rhodo, says of him, *loc. cit.* Tertullian wrote an entire book, now lost, *Adversus Apellaicos.* But see *Adv. Marc.* iii. 11; iv. 17; *Praescr.* 6, 30, 34; *De carne Christi*, 6, 8; *De anima*, 23, 36; also Hippolytus, *Syntagma* (Epiph. 43, Pseudo-Tert. 51, Philastr. 47); *Philosophum.* vii. 38.

with Tatian, and became his disciple; but he neither followed him in his journeys, nor in his doctrinal eccentricities. Eusebius knew several works of his. The most important, dedicated to a certain Callistion, was against the Marcionites; this contains his description of Apelles. He also wrote on the six days (of Creation). (Ἐξαήμερον).

During the episcopate of Soter, Rome heard the astounding news that a Roman army, commanded by the emperor himself, had been saved by the prayers of a troop of Christian soldiers. Such at least was the version of the affair which was current in Christian circles. The precarious position of the army is undoubted. And we also know, that the Romans in their extremity, invoked all the different divine powers whose rites the soldiers affected. But when the column, commemorative of the victories of Marcus Aurelius in Germania, was erected in the Campus Martius, the miracle was ascribed to the gods of the State. In those celebrated bas-reliefs, Jupiter Pluvius is still to be seen with the saving torrential rain—which enabled the legions to escape thirst and defeat—streaming from his hair, his arms, and his whole person.

The Antonine column was still in course of construction when, about 175 A.D., Pope Soter was succeeded by Eleutherus, the deacon of the days of Anicetus. In spite of the services of the "thundering Legion," persecution was everywhere on the increase. Eleutherus will be found before long in communication with the Martyrs of Lyons, and their messenger, St Irenæus. The new prophets of Phrygia also made a considerable stir at that time. The Roman Church was asked to take up a definite position about them; and we shall see later, which side she adopted.

On the death of Marcus Aurelius, the power remained exclusively in the hands of his son Commodus, who for more than three years had been associated with him in the government. He had no intention of conforming to the paternal maxims. Perhaps that is why he left the Christians in peace. Moreover, the Christians had influ-

ential connections in his immediate circle. His favourite Marcia was a Christian. Her life—in such surroundings—could scarcely be in strict accord with Gospel precepts, but at least she did all in her power to soften, by imperial favour, the rigorous laws of proscription. Her former tutor, a eunuch named Hyacinthus, then a member of the presbyterial college, kept her up to her good intentions in this respect.[1]

Marcia was not always successful. It was under Commodus that the martyrdom of Apollonius, a learned philosopher,[2] took place. He seems, however, to have been treated with special consideration.[3] He was judged, not by the Prefect of Rome, but by Perennis, the Prefect of the Pretorium, in the name of the emperor (180-185). And what is left of the interrogatories, shows that Perennis made great efforts to save him.

Some years later, Pope Victor (190) having succeeded Eleutherus, Marcia obtained the pardon of all the confessors who were then working as convicts in the mines of Sardinia. The list was given her by Victor. She entrusted the letters of pardon to Hyacinthus, a priest, who went to Sardinia, and returned with the liberated confessors.

[1] *Philosoph.* ix. 12.

[2] ἐπὶ παιδείᾳ καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ βεβοημένον, says Eusebius ; St Jerome (*De viris ill.* 42 ; *cf.* 53, 70) calls him a senator.

[3] The trial of Apollonius was amongst ancient *martyria*, collected by Eusebius. In his ecclesiastical history, he gives a summary of it (v. 21). Quite lately, two new versions of this work have been published ; one in Armenian (Reports of the Berlin Academy, 1893, p. 728) ; the other in Greek (*Anal. Bolland.*, vol. xiv., p. 286). From these accounts, the original text raises some difficulties. See Harnack's commentaries (Reports of the Berlin Academy, *loc. cit.*) ; Mommsen (*ibid.*, 1894, p. 497) ; K. J. Neumann (*Der röm. Staat und die allgemeine Kirche*, vol. i., p. 79) ; Geffcken (*Nachrichten*, Gottingen, phil. hist. cl., 1904, p. 262). The story of the accuser being executed, although his accusation had given rise to a criminal trial, is very improbable. The tale, reported only by Eusebius, may arise from some confusion ; some accident to the accuser may have been transformed into a legal punishment.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHURCHES OF THE SECOND CENTURY

Christianity in Italy and Gaul. The Martyrs of Lyons. Irenæus. The Gospel in Africa; the Martyrs of Scilli. The Church of Athens. Dionysius of Corinth, and his epistles. The Churches in Asia: Phrygia, Bithynia, and Thrace. Martyrdom of Polycarp. The Bishops of Asia: Melito and Apollinaris.

THE Church of Rome, the inner life of which was so intense during the 1st century of its history, could not but be a centre from which Christianity radiated. From the beginning, it was known far and wide by its authority, teaching, zeal, and charity, and its evangelizing influence must have been early felt in regions nearer at hand. But as to this we have no detailed information. There is no evidence of the foundation, or existence, of any other Christian group in Italy, during the whole of the 2nd century.[1] The oldest churches of the north of which the age can be reckoned with any accuracy, Ravenna, Milan, and Aquileia, date back barely to the time of the Severi. Probably in the south—in the Campagna, for instance, or in the neighbourhood of Rome—churches were founded earlier. But even if this were not merely a conjecture, we should still have to ascertain to what extent these groups had organised themselves, and how far they were distinct

[1] When St Paul landed at Puteoli, 61 A.D., he was received by a company of disciples established there (Acts xxviii. 13, 14). It is quite possible that this group continued to exist, and it may have organized itself into a church connected with that of Rome, but we know nothing about it.

from what was called the Church of Rome. Only the Roman Church is mentioned by the ancient authors of the time, or by the later writers who allude to this period.

In Gaul also, and in Africa, the beginnings of Christianity are shrouded in darkness. It is conjectured, but only conjectured, that in the 2nd century a Christian colony existed at Marseilles. Under Marcus Aurelius there was a church at Lyons and another at Vienne. A little later, St Irenæus mentions churches in Germania, and also in Celtic countries. So we may conclude that in these remote days, Christianity had already spread to some extent in ancient Gaul. The Church of Lyons was a radiating centre, a kind of mother-church. Amongst its members were indeed many Asiatics and Phrygians, but the native element was represented. We hear of local notabilities, such as Vettius Epagathus and Alexander the physician. Bishop Pothinus, an old man of ninety, and Irenæus the priest, presided over the little community. A severe trial befell them, 177 A.D. The Christians, though still few in number, were very unpopular. Men believed, or pretended to believe, all the abominable calumnies which were everywhere circulated about the Christian assemblies. No one would lodge them; the baths were closed to them; they were excluded from the market-place; they were hooted, beaten, and ill-treated in a thousand ways. At last the malicious reports attained such proportions, that the authorities intervened. The municipal magistrates and the tribune of the Roman cohort, stationed in Lyons, arrested a certain number of Christians, and put them to torture, with their slaves, some of whom were pagans. Most of the Christians stood firm, though the executioners, excited by the mob, carried the torture to the extreme limits of cruelty. A few, however—about ten—fell away. But an especially serious feature was, that the pagan slaves did not hesitate to confirm the current tales of infanticide and debauchery.

The legate of the district being absent, these preliminary proceedings did not lead to any sentence. The confessors, released from the rack, were thrown, still

quivering from their tortures, into loathsome dungeons, without either attention or food. Their brethren who were still at liberty, braved a thousand dangers to bring them help. Several died in prison, notably the old Bishop Pothinus. The apostates had not been separated from the rest. Touched by the loving-kindness of the confessors, and strengthened by their example, they nearly all repented of their weakness and professed the faith anew.

On the legate's return, several sentences were pronounced. Sanctus, the deacon of Vienne;[1] Maturus, a neophyte of amazing courage; Blandina, a frail and delicate female slave, and an Asiatic, Attalus of Pergamos, one of the pillars of the Church of Lyons, were all condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, and were despatched to the amphitheatre. The first to gain the martyr's palm were Sanctus and Maturus; they were first burned on a red-hot chair, and then devoured by raging beasts. That day, the beasts would not touch Blandina; so she was led back to prison, with Attalus, who had been discovered to be a Roman citizen.

The legate then deemed it wise to consult the emperor. Marcus Aurelius replied as might have been expected; the apostates were to be released, and the others executed. A last hearing took place. To the great surprise of the judge, and of all present, the apostates had become confessors, and but few remained to be set at liberty.

It was now the season when crowds poured into Lyons, from all the cities of Gaul, for the festivities held at the Altar of Rome and Augustus, at the confluence of the Saone and the Rhone. Games in the amphitheatre always formed a part of the official rejoicings. Those Christians who could claim the title of Roman citizens, the legate decapitated. There were still enough for the wild beasts. In spite of his Roman citizenship, Attalus was amongst these. He came in first, accompanied by the Phrygian physician Alexander, who had only just been arrested. Others followed. The last to suffer were Ponticus, a

[1] Τὸν διάκονον ἀπὸ Βιέννης. This expression seems to indicate that Sanctus was the head of the Christian community in Vienne.

child fifteen years of age, and the admirable Blandina, who, to the last, upheld the courage of her companions by her example and words. The remains of the martyrs were burned by the executioners, and their ashes were thrown into the Rhone.

When all was over, a letter with the melancholy but glorious tale was sent to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, in the name of the "servants of Christ, living at Vienne and Lyons."[1]

In this letter, the Church of Lyons also expressed its views on Montanism; some letters from the confessors on the same subject were enclosed. Several were addressed to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia; another, to the Bishop of Rome, Eleutherus, was taken direct to him by the priest Irenæus. The final salutation ran thus: "We salute you in God, now and always, Father Eleutherus. We have begged Irenæus, our brother and companion,[2] to carry these letters to you, and we commend him to you, as a man full of zeal for the cause of Christ. If we had thought that rank added to anyone's merit, we should first have presented him to you as priest of the Church."[3]

This commission caused the temporary absence of Irenæus. After the catastrophe, it fell to him, as bishop, to reanimate the remnants of the Church of Lyons. During the peace which followed the persecution under Marcus Aurelius, he had to devote himself entirely to his duties as pastor and missionary. The variety of languages spoken in Gaul added to his difficulties. Greek was not

[1] If the fact of Vienne being mentioned first has any significance, it can only be that of an act of courtesy on the part of the Christians at Lyons towards their brethren at Vienne. For the whole occurrence is certainly connected specially with Lyons. The magistrates of that colony would clearly have had no jurisdiction at Vienne; neither would the legate. Sanctus, the deacon of Vienne, seems to have been arrested at Lyons; no one else from Vienne is mentioned.

[2] Τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν καὶ κοινωνόν.

[3] The tone of this letter seems a little singular. We cannot help recalling the African confessors, whose presumption caused so much trouble to St Cyprian.

sufficient in Lyons, an essentially Latin city; and outside the town Celtic was necessary. Moreover, Gnosticism was spreading in Gaul, as elsewhere. Ptolemæus was gaining adherents there, either by personal influence, or by his writings; the Asiatic Mark, much opposed at home, had it more his own way with the simple, fervent souls of the Christians of the Rhone valley. Irenæus dealt with these heretics, along with many others—for in this field increase is rapid—in a large work of which some valuable Greek fragments and a complete Latin version have come down to us. His *Refutation of False Knowledge*[1] appeared about 185 A.D. In the following years, we find him much taken up with the religious affairs of Rome, in which he was always deeply interested.

In Africa also, the curtain, which hides the first days from us, is raised upon scenes of martyrdom. It is but natural to suppose that Christianity was early established in the great city of Carthage. That it spread thence into the interior, is clear from the fact, that under the pro-consul Vigellius Saturninus (180 A.D.), who first took strong repressive measures, a certain number of Christians were found in the little town of Scilli, at a considerable distance from the metropolis. Twelve of these, seven men and five women, were tried at Carthage before the pro-consul, July 17, 180 A.D., and upon their refusal to "return to Roman customs," they were all condemned to death and executed. This was not the first time that Christian blood flowed in Africa. The title of "first martyr" was given, in the 4th century, to one Namphano, of Madaura, in Numidia. We gather from the writings of Tertullian, that at the end of the 2nd century, Christians were very numerous in Carthage and the provinces; but he gives no details, and mentions four places only—Uthina, Adrumetum, Thysdrus, and Lambesis. Of the contemporary bishops of Carthage he says not one word.

Beyond the Adriatic, Christian evangelization, even in apostolic times, reached several of the coast towns in Dal-

[1] Ἔλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπὴ τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως.

matia[1] and Epirus; Nicopolis is mentioned in St Paul's epistles.[2] Epiphanes, the son of the heretic Carpocrates, came from the island of Cephalonia.[3] On the Greek mainland, the Church of Corinth, founded by St Paul, and already mentioned in connection with St Clement, still held a very important position. On his journey to Rome, Hegesippus conversed at Corinth with the Bishop Primus.

In all these lands, the reign of Antoninus had been a trying time for the Christians. As was always and everywhere the case, the opposition they encountered came less from the imperial magistrates than from the local authorities, whose zeal, however, had been moderated by Antoninus. Melito, under Marcus Aurelius, could quote rescripts of the preceding emperor addressed either to the assembly of Achaia,[4] or to the municipalities of Athens, Larissa, and Thessalonica.

Dionysius, who succeeded Primus as Bishop of Corinth, was a man of considerable importance. He was consulted on all sides, and his letters quickly obtained a wide circulation.[5] They were collected into a volume, perhaps during his lifetime: Eusebius had it in his hands, and made a very interesting abstract from it, for his history. In addition to the letter to the Romans,[6] there was also one addressed to the Church of Lacedæmon, in which he urged them to have a care for sound doctrine, and for peace and unity; another letter was addressed to the Church in Athens, which had just passed through an all but fatal crisis. The Athenians, having lost their Bishop Publius during a persecution, had wearied of the faith and of the Christian life, and had relapsed almost into paganism. Happily, the zeal of their new bishop, Quadratus, brought them back to the fold. In this letter, Dionysius reminds

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 10. [2] Titus iii. 12. [3] See p. 126.

[4] Πρὸς πάντας Ἕλληνας: this is the Κοινόν of Achaia, which met at Corinth.

[5] Some ill-intentioned persons tampered with his letters, that they might appear to have his sanction for their special views. Eusebius designates these letters by the expression καθολικαὶ πρὸς τὰς ἐκκλησίας ἐπιστολαί, which doubtless accords with their title, *H. E.* iv. 23.

[6] See above, p. 177.

the Athenians of their first bishop, Dionysius the Areopagite, converted by St Paul.

In Crete, there were already at least two churches, that of Gortyna and that of Knossos. To the Church at Gortyna, where the bishop was named Philip, Dionysius addressed congratulations on their courage—shown no doubt under some persecution; at the same time, he advised them to beware of heretics. It was perhaps at Dionysius' instigation that Philip wrote a treatise against the Marcionites.[1] In his letter to the Knossians, Dionysius advises their Bishop Pinytus not to exaggerate the duty of continence, but to consider the weakness of human nature. Pinytus replies, thanking the Bishop of Corinth, and begging him to write again, and not to fear rising above the first elements, or meting out to the Cretans more solid food. Dionysius also wrote to the more distant churches of Nicomedia and Amastris, and to a lady named Chrysophora. These letters throw but little light upon the Christian communities of Greece at the end of the 2nd century. There are no particulars as to the countries farther north.[2]

On the other side of the Ægean, as well as in Greece, Christianity had old and deep roots. Around the Church of Ephesus, the chief of those founded by St Paul, many others sprang up at an early date. Those of Alexandria-Troas, Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis are mentioned in his epistles. The Apocalypse refers besides to those of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Thyatira. The churches of Magnesia (on the Meander) and of Tralles appear in the letters of St Ignatius. Many others, only known later, no doubt existed from the beginning of the 2nd century.

Behind Asia Proper, many Christian communities existed on the plain of Phrygia. Phrygia was essentially

[1] Eusebius iv. 25.

[2] Between the time of St Paul and the 4th century, the only document extant which alludes to the churches of Macedonia is the Epistle of St Polycarp to the Church of Philippi, written in the time of St Ignatius, *c.* 115 A.D.

an agricultural country, and inhabited by a simple and gentle folk; their native rites were of fabulous antiquity, and had not been very deeply influenced by Hellenism. They involved great religious assemblies, near celebrated sanctuaries, and noisy, exciting ceremonies, presided over by wild and fanatic priests, Galli and Corybantes (priests of Cybele), whose religious frenzies were world-famous.

On his first mission, St Paul had stayed at Antioch in Pisidia, and at Iconium, both on the south-eastern boundary of Phrygia. A little later on, he crossed Phrygia twice, on his way from Syria into Macedonia and into Asia. Whether he himself founded other Christian churches there, or whether the Gospel was brought them from the neighbouring churches—Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, or Hierapolis—at any rate by the end of the 2nd century nearly half Phrygia was Christian.

In Bithynia also, on the Black Sea, Christianity spread very early. The governor, Pliny, complained to Trajan of this superstitious infection "which invaded not only the towns, but the villages and fields, making a desert around the temples, and ruining the trade in sacrificial victims." About this time, or a little later, Marcion's father was Bishop at Sinope. Under Marcus Aurelius, we hear of churches at Amastris and Nicomedia; Dionysius of Corinth, writing to the Church in Nicomedia, urged them to resist the Marcionite heresy; to that of Amastris, whose bishop was named Palmas, he explained certain texts of Scripture, teaching the rule of Truth as to chastity and marriage, and counselling loving-kindness towards penitent sinners and heretics whose hearts were touched by grace. From this Bithynian centre, Christianity spread towards Thrace, where, about this period, the two neighbouring churches of Debeltos and Anchialos[1] are mentioned in connection with Montanism.

After St Paul, their first apostle, the Christians of Asia proper were not bereft of illustrious leaders. For some time Timothy appears to have had the guidance of these churches. As we have seen, many witnesses of the

[1] On the Gulf of Bourgaz.

Gospel, who had been driven out by the Jewish War, or who had migrated for other reasons, came here. Thus the traditions of the primitive Church of Jerusalem were handed on to the Asiatic Christians. Philip the deacon and his daughters settled at Hierapolis, on the borders of Phrygia; St John appears to have lived more specially at Ephesus. Under Domitian he was exiled to Patmos, whence he wrote to the seven churches, sending them his Book of Visions. The seven letters of the Apocalypse, and the two short letters in the Johannine collection, witness to his authority in the churches of Asia, and show him in the terrible, and yet gentle, aspect in which tradition portrays him. The fourth of our canonical Gospels, and also the First Epistle of St John, appeared under his name after his death. They came rather late, and gave the Gospel story in a form little resembling that to which men were accustomed. And they were not accepted without opposition. But the same inspiration which guided the Church to accept the whole of the Old Testament, together with several additions of a very recent date, moved her to find a place for the Gospel of St John by the side of the documents already accepted. The doctrinal gain accruing from the Johannine theology compensated for the difficulties of interpretation, and these, on the whole, were then not very serious.

The persecution from which the old apostle had suffered seems to have spared his last days. But Asia soon had its martyrs. The Apocalypse extols Antipas[1] of Pergamos, who was slain near the dwelling-place of Satan, that is near the celebrated temple of Zeus Asclepios.

From St Paul's time, heresy had harassed the Asiatic Christians; we have traced it in the Apocalypse and in St Ignatius' epistles. And we have also noted that each of the churches in Asia was governed, in Trajan's time, by a hierarchy of three grades, bishop, priests, and deacons. One of these bishops, Polycarp of Smyrna, we already know. About the same time, or a little later, Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, compiled a book of traditions, and of essays on

[1] Apocalypse ii. 13.

interpretation, the loss of which is much to be deplored. For long, there lived in company with the heads of the Church certain highly venerated old Christians of the first days, of which they loved to tell. With them were prophets and prophetesses whose words were much valued, like the daughters of Philip, Ammias of Philadelphia, and Quadratus the apologist.

The fact that Quadratus was a writer, and one who did not fear to address himself even to emperors, shows that the possession of the gift of prophecy did not forbid a man the ordinary activities of life. And the name of Melito, the learned Bishop of Sardis, was also quoted as amongst the prophets.

Polycarp crowned his long and fruitful episcopate by martyrdom. Shortly after his return from Rome, a whirlwind of fanaticism broke over Smyrna. Cries arose: "Down with the atheists!" They clamoured for Polycarp. He was not to be found in Smyrna, for he was hastening from town to town exhorting the faithful, and foretelling his approaching martyrdom. Meanwhile some dozen Christians, one of whom was a certain Germanicus, were condemned and thrown to the beasts. But the proscribed were uplifted by the persecution; and Quintus, a Phrygian, and several others gave themselves up to the magistrates. Quintus had presumed too much on his strength. At the last moment, he failed. Polycarp was arrested near Smyrna, and borne to the amphitheatre, where the proconsul had him brought before him in his box. Being commanded to cry: "Down with the atheists!" he did so at once, evidently using the words in a very different sense to that of the pagan crowds. But when told to blaspheme Christ, he replied: "These eighty-six years I have served Him; and He has never done me wrong. He is my King and my Saviour, how could I blaspheme Him?" He was burned at the stake.[1]

After Polycarp, Melito held a foremost place among

[1] The Christians of Smyrna sent an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp to the Church of Philomelium, far away in the heart of Asia Minor. This document is the most ancient of those termed "Acts of

the Christians of Asia. Fragments only remain of his literary work, which Eusebius catalogued; it must have been considerable. Besides his apologetic treatises, mentioned above,[1] he wrote on various religious or philosophical questions, such as the nature of man, the senses, the soul, the body, and the intellect; the creation, and the generation of Christ, the devil, the Apocalypse of St John, faith, baptism, Sunday, the Church, hospitality, Easter, and the prophets,[2] probably in connection with Montanism which was then just emerging. We still possess the preface, addressed to a certain Onesimus, of a selection, made by him, of (Ἐκλογαί) Old Testament texts, which he thought referred to the Saviour. Before undertaking this work, Melito deemed it fitting to journey into Palestine, and investigate on the spot what were the authentic contents of the ancient Bible. Thence, he returned with a list which includes all the books of the Old Testament, preserved in the Hebrew, except the Book of Esther. His extracts, filling six volumes, he took from them alone. Melito's last work was called *The Key;* but its contents are unknown.[3]

the Martyrs." According to Harnack (*Texte und Unt.*, vol. iii., *sub finem;* cf. *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 362), the martyrdom of SS. Carpus, Papylus, and Agathonica, who were executed at Pergamos, took place in the time of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (161-169). The account of the sufferings of these saints (Harnack, *Texte und Unt.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 440) is genuine, but, I think, incomplete. From the only manuscript remaining, the martyrdom of Agathonica would appear to have been in reality suicide; nevertheless, the spectators exclaim: "Sad judgments! Unjust orders!" Clearly Agathonica had been condemned like the other two, and part of the text is here missing. The calendars of the 4th century make Carpus a bishop (of Pergamos?) and Papylus a deacon. We see, from the account of their martyrdom, that Papylus was a citizen of Thyatira. Being asked if he had any children, he replied that he had many, "in God," in all the provinces and towns. I think this should be interpreted according to Matt. xii. 48-50, rather than as alluding to any special evangelization in Asia.

[1] Page 153. [2] See chap. xv.

[3] Cardinal Pitra spent much time and trouble in a search for this "Key." He thought he had found it, in a Latin compilation of very late date, which he published with minute care (*Spic. Solesm.*, vols. ii. and iii.).

Besides his literary fame Melito left behind a remarkable reputation for sanctity.[1] The Asiatic episcopate boasted then of many such men: Papirius, who succeeded Polycarp as head of the Church of Smyrna; Bishop Sagaris of Laodicea, who suffered martyrdom under the pro-consul Sergius Paulus (*c.* 167 A.D.); Bishop Thraseas of Eumenia, in Phrygia, who was martyred at Smyrna; Bishop Apollinaris of Hierapolis, a man of letters and an apologist, like his brother of Sardis.[2] St Irenæus, who was also a native of Asia—and who, in his childhood, had both seen and heard Polycarp—remembered ancient "priests," whose words he liked to recall in refutation of Gnostic modernisms. One of them wrote a satire in iambics against Mark, a disciple of Valentinus, of which a fragment remains.[3]

These memories and fragments, which have survived so many shipwrecks, show how living and active Christianity in Asia already was in those early days. The two great Christian centres, in the 2nd century, were Rome and Asia. Nowhere else did anything of importance occur. Nothing happened in Asia, without echoing immediately in Rome, and *vice versâ*. Communication by sea was then easy for all, and intercourse was incessant. Polycarp, Marcion, Justin, Rhodo, Irenæus, Attalus of Pergamos, and Alexander the Phrygian, these three last settled at Lyons, are instances in point. Abercius, Bishop of Hierapolis, in the heart of Phrygia, may be included. He came to Rome, where he saw the majesty of the empire, and lived in the midst of a "people stamped with a glorious seal," as he describes the Christians.[4] And the controversies which soon arose over the Montanist prophecies, Easter, and Modalism, bring out still more clearly the constant intercommunication between the venerable churches of Asia and the great Metropolis of the West.

[1] Μελίτωνα τὸν εὐνοῦχον, τὸν ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι πάντα πολιτευσάμενον (Letter from Polycarp of Ephesus, Eusebius v. 24). [2] Page 153.

[3] Irenæus, *Haer.* i. 15. The fragments of the *presbyteri* have been collected in recent editions of the Apostolic Fathers.

[4] As to the epitaph of Abercius, I still adhere to the views expressed in my article, *L'Epitaphe d'Abercius*, published in 1895 in the *Mélanges* of the French School in Rome, vol. xv., p. 154.

CHAPTER XV

MONTANISM

Montanus and his prophetesses. The Heavenly Jerusalem. Condemnation of ecstatic prophecy. The saints of Pepuza. The churches of Lyons and Rome on Montanism. Tertullian and Proculus. Survival of Montanism in Phrygia.

THE Montanist movement[1] began in Phrygian Mysia, in a village called Ardabau,[2] under the pro-consulate of Gratus. Montanus was a convert, who, according to some traditions, had previously been a priest of Cybele, and he attracted attention by ecstasies and transports in which he uttered strange sayings. At such times he seemed to lose his own individuality; a divine inspirer spoke by his mouth, and not he himself. Two women, Prisca (or Priscilla) and Maximilla, soon developed the same phenomena, and associated themselves with him. All this was noised abroad, not only in the remote district where the village of Ardabau was situated, but throughout Phrygia and Asia, and as far as Thrace. The followers of the new prophets maintained that it was the Paraclete manifesting himself to the world. Others who could not accept their view, declared that it was simply a case of demoniac possession.

The Paraclete confidently announced the speedy return of Christ, and the Vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem

[1] See note at the end of chapter.

[2] This place has not been identified; it probably lay in the little explored region, which extends eastwards from Balikesri, towards the Makestos and the Rhyndakos.

descending from above, which was to appear first in the clouds, and then rest on the earth, at a spot indicated. This was a plain on the further side of Phrygia, between the two little towns of Pepuza and Tymion. The three prophets transported themselves thither, when or wherefore is not precisely known: they were followed by an immense multitude. In some places the people were so entirely won over to the movement that there were no Christians left in them.[1] In the feverish expectation of the last day, country, family, and all earthly ties were disregarded. Marriages were dissolved; and community of goods and the most severe asceticism prevailed. This state of mental exaltation was fostered by the words of the possessed prophets; the voice of the Paraclete was heard, and his exhortations animated them afresh.

Days, weeks, months, and years, however, passed away and still the Heavenly Jerusalem came not. But the Church on earth, after the first loss of balance, protested a good deal. The orthodoxy of the prophets was no doubt beyond reproach, and the circumstances of their time and surroundings lent them some support. The Gospel of St John, still in the full strength of its new popularity, had roused a special interest in the Paraclete; the descriptions of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and of the millenium, in the Apocalypse, were enthralling, and few Christians, in Asia or elsewhere, banished them from their thoughts on the end of all things. Both tradition and custom had consecrated the right of prophets to arouse Christians in the name of the Lord.

The Didache and the New Testament both show what a prominent place prophecy held in the life of the early

[1] This Montanist Exodus did not stand alone. Hippolytus (*In Dan.* iv. 18) mentions a similar event in his own day. A Syrian bishop led out a host of Christians, men, women, and children into the desert to meet Christ. In the end these poor dupes were arrested as brigands. Another bishop, this time in Pontus, predicted the end of the world during the current year; his people sold their cattle, and left their land untilled to prepare for the great day. In the 3rd century, a prophetess of Cappadocia is mentioned, who started an immense multitude *en route* for Jerusalem (Cypr., *Ep.* lxxv. 10).

churches. The Bishop of Sardis, Melito, was believed to have the prophetic gift. Before him, Quadratus, Ammias, and the daughters of Philip had been endowed with this gift. They were still famous. The asceticism of the Montanists did not exceed that permitted, though not imposed, in other Christian circles. It was free from the dualistic tendencies of the Gnostics and Marcionites: and anything that seemed extreme was justified by their firm belief in the near approach of the last day.

Still, this sudden excitement, this exodus, these exact determinations of time and place, introduced a sense of profound unrest among the Christian churches. Some of them had been in existence for nearly a century or more, and had grown accustomed to live an ordinary life with no special pre-occupation as to the end of all things. They soon met the prophets with the objection that their proceedings were contrary to custom. In the Old Testament, as in the New, prophets had never spoken in a state of ecstasy. The communication which, by their means, was established between God and their hearers, had not hindered them from preserving their own individuality. They spoke in the name of God, but it was they themselves who spoke. In the case of Montanus and his prophetesses, the Paraclete himself was heard, just as in certain pagan sanctuaries, the gods were heard to speak directly, by the mouth of pythonesses. "The man himself is a lyre," said the inspired voice, "and I am the bow which causes him to vibrate. . . . I am not an angel, nor a messenger . . . I am the Lord, the Almighty." . . . This seemed unusual, and an abuse, and reprehensible.

Possibly Melito had already dealt with the matter in his books on prophecy,[1] of which we have but the titles. Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis, resolutely attacked the new prophets.[2] Another very prominent person in the Christian world of Asia, Miltiades, wrote a treatise to maintain "that a prophet ought not to speak in ecstasy."

He was answered by skilful writers[3] amongst the

[1] Περὶ πολιτείας καὶ προφητῶν, Περὶ προφητείας (Eus., *H. E.* iv. 26).
[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 27; v. 16, 19. [3] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 17.

Montanists. The Catholics, however, did not confine themselves to writing; they soon adopted very different methods. Sotas, Bishop of Anchialos in Thrace, endeavoured to exorcise Priscilla; and two other Phrygian bishops, Zoticus of Comana, and Julian of Apamea, betook themselves to Pepuza, and assailed Maximilla. But these attempts failed, owing to the opposition of the sect.

The movement spread in Asia, sowing discord everywhere. In many places, synods assembled, in which the claims of the prophets were examined and discussed. At last the unity of the Church was broken; and the opponents of the Paraclete excommunicated his followers. Some, carried away by their zeal, even ventured to question the authority of those sacred books, on which the Montanists based their claims: and they rejected *en bloc* all St John's writings, the Apocalypse as well as the Gospel. This was the origin of that particular religious school which later St Epiphanius opposed under the name of Alogi.[1]

But if Montanus did not succeed in winning the churches of Asia as a whole, he at least managed to introduce profound divisions among them. The Heavenly Jerusalem did not appear upon earth; but, on the other hand, the movement led to the foundation of a terrestrial Jerusalem. The name of Pepuza was changed; it was called the New Jerusalem. It became a holy place; a sort of Metropolis of the Paraclete. The necessity of feeding the crowds who flocked there at first, led to some kind of organization in the sect. Before long several others were associated with Montanus, and continued in

[1] Amongst other things, the Alogi criticized the Apocalypse for its mention of a Church of Thyatira, which in their time did not exist. St Epiphanius (*Haer.* li. 33) concedes the truth of the statement, but only as to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century. He explains it by saying that the Christians of Thyatira all embraced Montanism, though they abandoned it later. But their conversion to Montanism was an insufficient ground for the assertion that no church existed at Thyatira. Doubtless, for some time during the 2nd century this church disappeared.

authority after his death. A certain Alcibiades,[1] Theodotus, described in one of the documents we have[2] as the first overseer (ἐπίτροπος) of prophecy, and lastly, Themison, who, hoping to extend and defend the movement, wrote a sort of encyclical.[3] Themison, it was said, was a confessor of the Faith. The Montanists, indeed, did not flinch from martyrdom, and dwelt with some complacency on their own merits in this respect.

All this was much discussed by the opposition. The financial organization, the collectors of offerings, and the salaried preachers of the sect were keenly criticized. It was said that the prophets and prophetesses led a very comfortable, and even fashionable life, at the expense of their converts.

"Let them be judged by their works," men said. "Does a prophet frequent the public baths and paint himself, and does he consider his raiment? Does he play dice? Or lend money on usury?"[4] Doubts were also expressed as to the virginity of Priscilla, who like her companion Maximilla had, it was said, left her husband to follow Montanus. Themison was but a false confessor: he had purchased his release from martyrdom. Another confessor, much honoured in the sect, a certain Alexander, was even more worthless. He had indeed been summoned before the tribunal, but as a brigand and not as a Christian. This was under the pro-consulate of Aemilius Frontinus;[5] as the archives of Ephesus testified.

Montanus and Priscilla died first. Maximilla remained alone and suffered much from the opposition to which her sect was exposed. The Paraclete groaned within her: "I am persecuted as though I were a wolf. I am not a wolf; I am Word, Spirit, and Power." At last she died,

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 3; τὴν τῶν κατὰ Μιλτιάδην λεγομένων αἵρεσιν (we must evidently correct Μιλτιάδην into Ἀλκιβιάδην). *Cf.* v. 3, § 4, in which the sect is designated by the expression: οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Μοντανὸν καὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην καὶ Θεόδοτον.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 16, §§ 14, 15.

[3] *Ibid.* v. 16, § 17; v. 18, § 5.

[4] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 18, § 11.

[5] The date of this pro-consulate is uncertain, as is that of Gratus.

having predicted wars and revolutions. Malevolent people declared she hanged herself; the same was said of Montanus; as to Theodotus, the story was that, in an ecstasy, he rose towards heaven, and falling back again was killed. This gossip is repeated by the anonymous[1] writer quoted by Eusebius, but he expressly declares that it is not to be relied on. He is quite right. Such stories as these do not help us to form any adequate conception of such an important religious movement. It did not end with the death of the prophets. Thirteen years after the death of Maximilla, the new prophecy still divided the Christian community of Ancyra. And for a long time the Montanists caused discussion and controversy, not only in Asia Minor, but in Antioch and Alexandria, and in the churches of the West. Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, condemned them, in a letter addressed to Caricus and Pontius; to this were attached the signatures of several other bishops, together with their protests against the innovators.[2] Clement of Alexandria, in his *Stromata*,[3] proposes to treat the subject in a book *On Prophecy*. But it is in the West that the history of Montanism has special importance.

Even as early as 177 A.D., the date of the martyrs of Lyons, the mind of the Church in Gaul and in Rome was deeply stirred by the new prophesying. The new Church of Lyons, having many Asiatic and Phrygian members, was well informed on all that took place in Asia. In Rome also, the matter came up very early, and, as in many other places, it caused at first great perplexity. The confessors of Lyons wrote about it, from prison, "to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, and also to Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome." These letters were inserted in the celebrated account of the martyrs of Lyons, with the opinion of the "brethren in Gaul," on the spirit of prophecy claimed by Montanus, Alcibiades, and Theodotus. Eusebius, who actually saw the document, describes it as wise and quite orthodox; yet his words convey the im-

[1] For this author, see p. 206. [2] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 19.
[3] *Strom.* iv. 13, 93; *cf.* i. 24, 158; v. 13, 88; vii. 18, 108.

pression that it was not entirely opposed to the Phrygian movement. St Irenæus, who carried these letters to Rome, cannot be numbered amongst the opponents of Montanism. It is conceivable that the Christians of Lyons rather advised toleration, and the preservation of the peace of the Church. We do not know what effect this intervention had on Eleutherus, nor how long the Church of Rome was in taking a decision. It looks as if Rome also felt that there was no call for mutual excommunication. Tertullian says the decision was not unfavourable to the prophets, and that the Pope had already despatched conciliatory letters to that effect, when a confessor, named Praxeas, arrived from Asia with fresh information, and succeeded in inducing him to alter his first decision.[1]

Thus the Montanist pretensions to inspiration did not succeed in obtaining recognition in Rome. It is possible that for some time, Rome merely maintained an attitude of reserve.[2] The Paschal controversy was not likely to incline the Roman Church to attach much weight to the authority of the Asiatic episcopate. But a more decided attitude was eventually taken. Already by the beginning of the 3rd century, as the Passion of St Perpetua and the writings of Tertullian show, it was necessary to choose between communion with the Church and belief in the new prophesying.

[1] *Adv. Prax.*, 1: "Nam idem (Praxeas) episcopum Romanum agnoscentem iam prophetias Montani, Priscae, Maximillae, et ex ea agnitione pacem ecclesiis Asiae et Phrygiae inferentem, falsa de ipsis prophetis et ecclesiis eorum asseverando, praedecessorum eius auctoritates defendendo, coegit et litteras pacis revocare iam emissas et a proposito recipiendorum charismatum concessare." The name of the Pope is not mentioned. But it could hardly have been anyone but Eleutherus. This attitude of hesitation would not be conceivable later, when the churches of Asia had assumed a position of decided opposition to the Montanist movement. But it would not be unnatural that this Roman decision should be arrived at about the same time as that of the Gallican Christians.

[2] Tertullian certainly does not say that the Pope, with whom Praxeas was in communication, had actually condemned the new prophesying; he only says that after having allowed it, he gave up his intention of publicly recognizing it.

The movement was therefore discouraged in the West as in the East. Nevertheless, it continued to spread. The prophets being dead, the objections to their ecstasies gradually subsided. What was extravagant and open to criticism in the Phrygian organisation and in the assemblies at Pepuza, naturally attracted less attention out of Asia. From a distance, the most striking feature was the great moral austerity of the Montanists. Their fasts, their special rules of life, presented no features that orthodox ascetics had not long made familiar. Visions, ecstasies, and prophecies were equally familiar. In many lands, those who led specially mortified lives, enthusiasts and people much imbued with the idea of the Second Advent, felt themselves attracted by the new prophesying. Tertullian, having long lived in a state of mind which may be described as Montanist, finally became an open convert to Montanus, Priscilla, and Maximilla (*c.* 205 A.D.). This was not then possible without a rupture with the Catholic Church. But that did not hinder him. The Montanists of Africa chose him as their head, and even called themselves Tertullianists. This is not the place to speak of the writings he published, both before and after his separation from the Church. It is enough to say that his most important Montanist work, the treatise in seven books on ecstasy, *De Extasi*, no longer exists. The seventh book he devoted to a refutation of Apollonius.[1] Tertullianists existed till St Augustine brought their last Carthaginian adherents back to the Catholic Church.[2]

About this time the Montanists were represented in Rome by a certain Proculus or Proclus, highly venerated

[1] For this anti-Montanist writer, see p. 206.

[2] Augustine, *Contra haereses*, 86. It was, no doubt, the denomination of Tertullianists, customary in Carthage, which led St Augustine to consider the Tertullianists as a different sect to the Montanists, and to believe that Tertullian, having been a Montanist, left the Phrygian sect to found one of his own. Under the usurper Eugenius (392-394), Octaviana, a Tertullianist lady, coming to Rome from Africa, managed to establish her form of worship in the Church of SS. Processus and Martinian on the Via Aurelia (*Praedestinatus*, c. 86). We gather from this that the Montanists had then no place of meeting in Rome.

by Tertullian. St Hippolytus paid some slight attention to the Montanists, but without dwelling much on them; he objects to their fasts, and more especially to their trust in Montanus and his prophetesses. Another Roman author, Caius, wrote a dialogue against Proclus, of which a few lines survive. It does not seem that the sect ever took deep root in Rome, for after St Hippolytus, we hear no more of it.

In Phrygia, however, Montanism lasted much longer. The New Jerusalem was long venerated. There lay the mother-community.[1] Annual pilgrimages replaced an exodus *en masse*. There was a great feast—Easter or Pentecost—which began with a dismal display of fasting and ended with great rejoicings. A permanent organisation had taken the place of the prophets and their first lieutenants. First came the Patriarchs, then the *Kenons*.[2] These two grades seem to have represented the central government of the sect; the local hierarchy, bishops, priests, etc., was subordinated to them. Women had been intimately connected with the origin of the movement; they always held a higher place in the sect than in the Church. The Church had had its prophetesses like the Montanists; for a long time still it had deaconesses. According to St Epiphanius, the Montanists admitted women to the priesthood and the episcopate. He also says that, in their ceremonies, seven virgins, dressed in white, and carrying in their hands lighted torches, played a great part.[3] These virgins indulged in ecstatic transports, weeping over the sins of the world, and so carried away the congregation that they too were melted to tears. In his day the sect was known under various names, such as Priscillianists, Quintillianists, Tascodrugites, and Artotyrites. The two first names were derived of course from those of notable Montanists. The name of Tascodrugites came from two Phrygian words, signifying the forefinger and the nose. Some of the sect, it appears, placed their finger in their nose during prayer. The name Artotyrites was

[1] Eusebius ii. 25; iii. 28; iii. 31; *cf.* vi. 20.

[2] *Cenonas*, in the accusative, in St Jerome; from it have been derived the terms Κοινωνοί or Οἰκόνομοι.

[3] *Haer.* xlix.

derived from the use of bread and cheese in their mysteries. All this is but doubtful. And still more so is the rumour, an evident calumny, that in one of their rites they bled a child to death.[1]

Their peculiar method of determining the date of Easter is better attested. During the controversy over the various orthodox reckonings, the Montanists fixed on a settled date in the Julian calendar, April 6.[2]

But these details on the Montanism of a later date have but a relative interest. What is really important is the origin and character of the primitive movement, and the attitude of the Church. However eagerly the speedy return of Christ was looked for, towards the end of the 2nd century, however deep was the respect then felt for the prophetic spirit and its various manifestations, the Church was not drawn away by Montanus from the true path; neither prophecy in general, nor the expectation of the Last Day was forbidden; but orthodox tradition was upheld against religious vagaries, and the authority of the hierarchy against the claims of private inspiration.

Note on the Sources of the History of Montanism and on its Chronology

1. *Sources.*—The best information as to the doctrine of the Montanists is found in the writings of Tertullian, but as Tertullian wrote about half a century after its birth, a certain development had no doubt taken place. Besides, the Montanism he knew was imported from afar, and adapted to circumstances very different from those of its origin. Eusebius has preserved two documents, or rather fragments, on its early history in Phrygia (*H. E.*, v. 16, 17). Both are anti-Montanist. The first is addressed to a certain Avircius Marcellus —identified quite naturally with Abercius, Bishop of Hierapolis, towards the end of the 2nd century—and is divided into three books. Maximilla had been dead for thirteen years when it was written, and during this interval the sect had suffered neither opposition nor persecution.

It is difficult to place these thirteen years of peace. It is best, I think, to identify them with the reign of Commodus (March 17, 180, to

[1] *Haer.* xlviii. 14; xlix. 2.

[2] Sozomen, *H. E.* vii. 18.

December 31, 192), with the addition, if necessary, of some months under Pertinax and Didius Julianus. The other work, by a certain Apollonius, appeared forty years after the first appearance of Montanus. It must not be forgotten that these documents are controversial, and keenly controversial. Anti-Montanist writings, which may not be identical with these, are mentioned by St Epiphanius (*Haer.* xlviii. 2 *et seq.*) and Didymus, in his treatise on the Trinity. As for Montanist books, we have but a few sayings of the "Paraclete," preserved either by Tertullian, or in the above-mentioned controversial books. The sect appears to have possessed an official collection of them formed by one Asterius Urban (Eus., *H. E.* v. 16, 17). All that has come down to us of the Montanist oracles has been collected by Bonwetsch, at the end (page 197) of his book on Montanism, *Die Geschichte des Montanismus*, Erlangen, 1881, which is the best monograph on this religious movement.[1]

2. *Chronology*.—The two Phrygian authors cited know the exact date of the origin of Montanism; the anonymous writer even points it out with precision: "under the pro-consulate of Gratus." Unfortunately we do not yet know the date of this pro-consulate. The chronicle of Eusebius gives 172 A.D. as the date of the appearance of Montanus; St Epiphanius (*Haer.* xlviii. 1) places it in the nineteenth year of Antoninus Pius, that is 156-157 A.D. It is not easy to choose between these two dates. It was not until the year 177, that Montanism began to disturb Western Christianity, and according to whether we adopt the chronology of St Epiphanius, or that of Eusebius, we must allow the movement a longer or a shorter period of incubation. From what has been said as to the date of the anonymous work addressed to Abercius Marcellus, this document would be of the year 193, and Maximilla must have died about the same time as the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, that is 180 A.D. The two other prophets, Montanus and Priscilla, had disappeared before her. All uncertainty would be at an end, if only some inscription would reveal to us the exact date of the pro-consulate of Gratus. But unfortunately, the epigraphical discoveries, which give with so much precision the chronology of many pro-consuls, of no historical interest, furnish us with no information on the date of Gratus.

[1] *Cf.* the article "Montanismus," by the same author, in the *Encyclopedia* of Hauck, vol. xiii. (1903), p. 417.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PASCHAL CONTROVERSY

The Christian Pasch. Various uses. Divergence between the Asiatic use and the Roman use. Pope Victor and St Irenæus. The Asiatic use abandoned.

THE Church derived the practice of devoting one day in seven specially to the service of God, from the Jewish ritual system. But the observance of the Sabbath was left to the Judaic-Christians, and the Church early introduced in its stead the observance of Sunday, which was characterized rather by meetings for religious worship than by cessation from manual labour. These meetings were two: the vigil, in the night between Saturday and Sunday, and the celebration of the Liturgy, on Sunday morning. Before long "stations" or fasts, on Wednesdays and Fridays, were associated with these meetings.[1] There was no reason why Christians should observe the feasts and fasts of the Jewish calendar. They were allowed to drop out of use. Nevertheless each year one of these holy days, the Paschal Feast or the Feast of the Azymes, recalled the memory of the Passion of the Saviour. The memories which Israel had connected, and still connected, with this anniversary might no longer be of interest; but it was impossible to forget that Our Lord had died for the salvation of the world on one of those days. The

[1] Sunday is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (xx. 7) in connection with an event which occurred, 57 A.D. The *Didache* and *The Shepherd* of Hermas speak of the "Stations."

Pasch was therefore retained, though the ritual details of the Jewish observance were omitted.[1]

As, however, Christians had not at first made any concerted arrangement, differences soon arose in the manner of celebrating the Christian Pasch. In Asia, they kept it on the 14th of the first Jewish month, the 14th Nizan.[2] In Rome, and nearly everywhere else, the feast was not observed on that particular day—for a point was made of keeping it on Sunday—but that day determined which special Sunday should be devoted to the Pasch solemnities.

This difference as to the day was naturally connected with a different way of interpreting the feast. On the 14th of the month Nizan—or according to the evangelists, on the next day—Christ had died; on the Sunday, He rose again. Neither of these great events could be ignored. The festival of Sunday was counterbalanced by the solemn Good Friday. That week the ordinary fast of the "station" was observed with rigorous strictness; the general tendency being to prolong it till Sunday morning. Thus, the Christian of those days mourned for His Master during the whole time that He had been under the dominion of death.

In Asia, where they still made a point of keeping to the 14th Nizan, their thoughts seem to have centred round Jesus as being the true Paschal Lamb. So they replaced the ritual feast of the Jews that evening by the Feast of the Eucharist. According to the synoptic Gospels, indeed, the Lord was crucified, not on the 14th but on the 15th; in those days, however, things were not gone into so minutely, and by a slight anticipation, the

[1] The sacrifice of the Lamb could only take place in the Temple. The Feast of Passover was really peculiar to Jerusalem. Yet, on that day even outside Jerusalem, Jewish households partook of a meal of a religious character.

[2] It must not be forgotten, that with the ancients, the day was reckoned from evening to evening, and not from midnight to midnight. The Paschal Lamb was slain on the afternoon of the 14th. And that evening meal was reckoned as belonging to the 15th day (the Feast of the Azymes).

Sacrifice of Calvary was made to agree with that of His symbolic prototype, the Paschal Lamb.[1] At any rate, the fourth Gospel soon rectified this discrepancy, by altering the date of the Passion from the 15th back to the 14th.

Now, how did the Christians of Asia celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection? Did they keep it two days after the 14th, or on the next following Sunday? Did they indeed celebrate it by any special commemoration? We do not know. All we know is, that the fast which preceded their Paschal Feast—for they also observed a fast—ended on the 14th. Under such ill-regulated conditions, misunderstandings were inevitable. And even amongst the Christians of Asia, difficulties soon arose. The Church of Laodicea was agitated in 167, by a serious controversy on the Paschal celebration. Melito of Sardis wrote a treatise on the subject,[2] as did Apollinaris of Hierapolis. As they both advocated the observance of the 14th,[3] the quartodeciman use, it is difficult to see what the Laodicean disagreement could have been over; certainly Apollinaris defended the 14th by a reference to the Gospel of St John, and refused to admit that the Lord kept the Pasch on the eve of His death.[4] Was this perhaps not in accordance with Melito's view? Was this the point upon which they differed? We do not know.

A far more widespread controversy was bound to come, some day or other, between the advocates of the quarto-

[1] The use of the symbol of the Lamb to represent the Saviour is of extreme antiquity (Acts viii. 32; 1 Peter i. 19; John i. 29, 36; Apocalypse, *passim*).

[2] Eusebius iv. 26.

[3] Melito is formally cited by Polycrates as one of his authorities. But not Apollinaris. In passages of his preserved in the *Paschal Chronicle*, he employs language decidedly quartodeciman. Hippolytus and Clement of Alexandria (*ibid.*) say: "Christ is the true Passover." Apollinaris says: "The 14th is the true Pasch." The shade of difference is discernible.

[4] The text is preserved in the *Paschal Chronicle* (Migne, *P. G.*, vol. xcii., p. 80). Apollinaris reproached his adversaries for suggesting a discordance between the Gospels. No doubt he believed he could reconcile the Synoptics with St John. I also have tried to do so, following many others. It is wiser to acknowledge that, on this point, we are not in a position to reconcile the evangelists.

deciman use—peculiar to Asia—and those maintaining the Dominical or Sunday use, which was almost universal elsewhere.

The discrepancy was plain enough, and was already recognised in Rome by Trajan's and Hadrian's time There were many Christians of Asia in Rome at that time; and the very early Popes, Xystus and Telesphorus, saw them every year keep their Pasch the same day as did the Jews. They maintained that was correct. It was allowed to pass, and though the rest of Rome observed a different use, no one fell out with them. But later on, this divergence seemed sufficiently important to demand some effort to remove it. Polycarp during his stay in Rome, tried to convince Pope Anicetus that the quarto-deciman use was the only one permissible. He did not succeed. Neither could Anicetus succeed in persuading the old master to adopt the Roman method. They parted, nevertheless, on the best of terms. Under Soter, the successor of Anicetus, the relations appear to have been a little more strained. It was about this time that the troubles in Laodicea arose: the question was growing crucial. About 190 A.D., Victor, the second in succession to Soter, determined to have done with it. He explained his views to the bishops of Asia, and begged Bishop Polycrates of Ephesus to call them together for a conference. Polycrates did assemble them. But they adhered steadfastly to their old custom. The Bishop of Ephesus replied in their name to Pope Victor, by a singularly forcible letter, citing all the illustrious Christians of Asia, beginning with the apostles Philip and John. He himself came of a family long consecrated to the Church, for seven of his relations had been bishops. All the saints and all the bishops whom he quotes kept the feast on the 14th day. He announced that he intended to continue the same practice, "without allowing himself to be scared by any threats, for it is written: It is better to obey God, than man."

It became manifest, however, that the churches of Asia stood alone in their view. Other Episcopal synods assembled to consider the matter. All their synodical

letters—of which Eusebius examined the archives—were in favour of the Dominical use. Bishops Theophilus of Cesarea, Narcissus of Jerusalem, Cassius of Tyre, Clarus of Ptolemais, and many others, all took part in the Palestinian council. They all said that their custom agreed with that of the Church of Alexandria as to the celebration of Easter. The Bishops of Osroene concurred. The usage of Antioch, about which we have no direct evidence, could not have differed from theirs. The envoys from Pontus under their Senior Bishop Palmas of Amastris, Bishop Bacchylus of Corinth, and Irenæus, in the name of the Christians of Gaul, over whom he presided, all expressed the same view.

Strong in such support, Victor went farther. He determined to break down the resistance of the Asiatics, by cutting them off from communion with the Church. But the letters he sent out with that object did not meet with the same response as his appeal to tradition. Irenæus intervened, together with other bishops. Though agreeing in the main with the Roman Church, they could not, for such an insignificant matter, allow venerable churches, founded by apostles, to be treated as centres of heresy, and cut off from the family of Christ.

It is probable that Victor thought better of his severe measures. But certainly, in the long run, the churches of Asia adopted the Roman use. By the 4th century and notably at the Council of Nicæa, nothing more was said on the subject. There were still a few quartodecimans, but even in Asia they were but a small sect, quite outside the Catholic Church.[1] In Rome, for a short time—evidently among the settlers from Asia—there was some resistance. A kind of schism was organised by a certain Blastus. Irenæus knew him and wrote to him on the matter.[2] But this opposition did not last.[3]

[1] See, on this subject, my article, *La question de la Pâque au concile de Nicée*, in the *Revue des questions historiques*, July 1880.

[2] Περὶ σχίσματος (Eusebius v. 15, 20; *cf.* Pseudo-Tert. 53.)

[3] In the *Philosophumena*, written forty years later, the quartodecimans are alluded to as isolated individuals (*τινὲς φιλόνεικοι τὴν φύσιν, ἰδιῶται τὴν γνῶσιν, μαχιμώτεροι τὸν τρόπον* (viii. 18).

CHAPTER XVII

CONTROVERSIES IN ROME—HIPPOLYTUS

The Roman Emperors Commodus and Severus. Pope Zephyrinus and Callistus the Deacon. Hippolytus. Adoptionist Christology. The Theodotians. The Roman Alogi and the Montanists: Caius. The Theology of the Logos. The Modalist School: Praxeas, Noëtus, Epigonus, Cleomenes, Sabellius. Perplexities of Zephyrinus. Condemnation of Sabellius. Schism of Hippolytus: the *Philosophumena*. The Doctrine of Callistus; his Government. The Literary Work of Hippolytus; his Death; his Memory. The Roman Church after Hippolytus. Pope Fabian and Novatian the Priest.

FROM the days of Nerva and Trajan, the emperors succeeded each other by adoption, and governed with wisdom. The paternal affection of Marcus Aurelius revived the system of hereditary succession: a great misfortune for the empire. Under his son Commodus, Rome saw a repetition of the mad tyranny of Caligula and Nero. A sovereign caring for nothing but the amphitheatre, where the dregs of the people applauded his skill as a gladiator: wealthy citizens demoralised by terror, decimated by proscription; government carried on chiefly by means of the prætorian guard; all this the philosopher-emperor had led up to by associating his son with himself in the government. It lasted for thirteen years.

On December 31, 192, Marcia, the morganatic wife of Commodus, seeing her own name on the list of persons to be killed the next night, was beforehand with the emperor, and ended these infamies. The prætorian guard were made to proclaim an old officer, Pertinax, but

his severity soon disgusted them so completely that they murdered him. Two senators then presented themselves as candidates for the succession. The one who promised most, Didius Julianus, was chosen, and forced by the guard upon the Senate and the Roman people. This transmission of power by the garrison of Rome did not suit the armies on the frontier. They chose their own generals, Severus, Niger, and Albinus, as candidates for the empire. Severus, who was commanding in Pannonia, was the first to arrive in Rome, where he established himself. Then, having come to terms with Albinus—the commander of the army in Brittany, already proclaimed in Gaul—he advanced against Niger, his Eastern competitor, and conquered him. Turning next against Albinus, he got rid of him also, and remained the sole master of the empire, severe in deed as in name. Order was re-established, the frontiers were defended, the Roman armies appeared again in Parthia, and this time carried their conquests as far as the Persian Gulf.

Severus was harsh to the Christians, as to everyone else. Tertullian protested against his severities in his various writings of the year 197, *Ad Martyres*, *Ad Nationes*, *Apologeticus*. Severus strengthened the laws against the Christians, and by a special edict, forbade conversions. But we shall revert to this point later on.

Pope Victor died during this reign, in 198 or 199. He was succeeded by Zephyrinus. And with Zephyrinus, the history of the Roman Church becomes for a time rather less obscure. The new pope was a simple and unlettered man. He was scarcely installed, when he summoned a person called Callistus, then living in retreat at Antium, and associated him with himself in the government of the clergy, especially confiding to him the care of the cemetery. "The cemetery" had been, until then, in the villa of the Acilii, upon the Via Salaria. Callistus transported it to the Via Appia, near which were several very ancient family burying-places, known by the names of Prætextatus, of Domitilla, and of Lucina. From the 3rd century, these family burying-places formed a nucleus of extensive cata-

combs, where the popes had a special funereal chamber. Although they continued to bury in the cemetery of Priscilla, and although new burying-places were opened elsewhere, the cemetery in the Via Appia became especially prominent. It was called by the name of Callistus, although he alone, of all the popes of the 3rd century, was not buried there.

Callistus had made himself rather notorious under the previous popes. Hippolytus, his bitter enemy, says he was first the slave of a certain Carpophorus, a Christian of Cæsar's household;[1] and that his master had a bank in the Piscina Publica[2] and entrusted Callistus with funds to run it. Callistus managed the affair very badly, and to escape from the anger of Carpophorus he tried to run away. He was embarking at Portus, when he saw his master arrive; he threw himself into the sea, but was fished out again and sent to the pistrinum.[3] Attacked by the creditors of his slave, among whom were many Christians, Carpophorus released him. Callistus did his best to find the money. He had, in fact, debtors among the Jews; he went to find them in the synagogue. A great commotion ensued. The Jews declared they had been disturbed in their ceremonies, and dragged their creditor before the Prefect of Rome, Fuscianus, accusing him of insulting them, and denouncing him as a Christian. And in spite of the efforts of Carpophorus, his slave was condemned, as a Christian, to the mines of Sardinia.

All this happened during the episcopate of Eleutherus.[4] Some time afterwards, the confessors in Sardinia were liberated, as we have said before, by the intervention of Marcia.[5] The name of Callistus was not on the list given by Pope Victor to Marcia. But Hyacinthus the priest,

[1] No doubt Marcus Aurelius Carpophorus, *C. I. L.* vi. 13040; *cf.* De Rossi, *Bull.* 1866, p. 3.

[2] This public Piscina was replaced shortly afterwards by the Baths of Caracalla.

[3] A mill worked by the lowest slaves, as a punishment.—*Translator's Note.*

[4] Fuscianus was prefect from 185 or 186, till the spring of 189.

[5] See above, p. 183.

who was sent by the pope to Sardinia, persuaded the procurator to release Callistus with the others. He then returned to Rome; but, after all that had occurred, there were too many in Rome who looked at him askance. Victor sent him to Antium and gave him a monthly pension. It was from this position, that of a pensioned confessor, that he passed to the councils of Zephyrinus, no doubt in the capacity of deacon. In his eight or ten years' retreat he had probably had plenty of time to cultivate his mind. Yet he seems always to have remained a man of action and governing power, rather than a trained theologian.

But there was no lack of theologians in Rome. Among the presbyters was one of the first order, Hippolytus, a disciple of St Irenæus. His later quarrels with his superiors, and the fact that he wrote in Greek, a language that shortly afterwards ceased to be spoken in Rome, combined to cause the greater part of his works to be forgotten. But the researches of contemporary erudition are gradually bringing them to light, and they show that the great Roman writer had no occasion to envy the literary fame of Origen, his Alexandrian brother. Origen knew him personally. During a visit which he paid to Rome, in the time of Pope Zephyrinus, he was present one day at the delivery of a homily by Hippolytus, who contrived to introduce into his sermon an allusion to the illustrious Alexandrian.[1]

Moreover, Rome had never ceased to be the favourite resort of Christian thinkers and religious adventurers. As in the days of Hadrian and Antoninus, they still flocked there, keeping the Church in a perpetual state of agitation. And interesting controversies arose, the precursors of those which afterwards, during the 4th and following centuries, caused such serious disturbance.

The first Christians, as we have so often said, were all of one mind with regard to the Divinity of Jesus Christ. They sing hymns, said Pliny, to the Christ whom they honour as God, *quasi deo*. "My brothers," says the author of the pseudo-Clementine homily, "we must think of Jesus

[1] Jerome, *De viris ill.* 61.

Christ as God."[1] But *how* was He God? How could His Divinity be reconciled with the strict Monotheism which Christians, as well as Israelites, professed? Here was the parting of the ways. Setting aside the Gnostics, who, though they differed from other Christians in their conception of God, were very explicit as to the Divinity of the Saviour, we find that the current opinions may be summed up under two chief types: first, Jesus is God because He is the Son of God incarnate; second, Jesus is God, because God has adopted Him as Son, and raised Him to the Divine status. The first explanation is that given most explicitly by St Paul and St John, who both teach, without any circumlocution, the pre-existence of the Son of God before His incarnation in time. St Paul does not employ the term Logos (the Word) to indicate the pre-existent Christ. It appears in the writings of St John, and it was some time before these writings, being considerably later than those of St Paul and the first Christian preaching, were accredited to their canonical position, so that it is at first necessary to distinguish between the fundamental and commonly received doctrine of the pre-existent Christ, and that more special aspect of it derived from the term Logos. The apologists, beginning with St Justin, laid great stress upon the idea of the Logos; but it was a purely philosophical idea, and the deductions drawn from it were usually quite over the heads of simple believers.

These simple believers — except the Ebionites of Palestine, who persistently declared Jesus to be a great prophet, and saw only a Messianic attribute in His title of Son of God—either abstained altogether from puzzling themselves, and weakening their belief in the Divinity of the Saviour (and these were certainly the greater number) —or they explained it to themselves by one of the two alternatives indicated above, Incarnation or Adoption. The language of Hermas is, it seems, adoptionist. He has got hold of the idea of a divine person, distinct, in a certain sense, from God the Father, who is for him the Son of God or the Holy Spirit. With this divine person, the Saviour is

[1] Δεῖ ἡμᾶς φρονεῖν περὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὡς περὶ Θεοῦ, 2 Clement i.

permanently connected during His mortal life, but not in the way afterwards described as the Hypostatic Union. His work finished, He is admitted, in recognition of His merit, to the honours of apotheosis.

Hermas did not present these ideas properly developed as a thesis. They make a transitory appearance, in a corner of his book, by the way, in connection with other things well calculated to distract attention from them. But the mere fact, that a man like Hermas should have such an interpretation in his mind at all, and have it in such perfectly good faith, is none the less remarkable. We shall see later that it is connected with other similar manifestations.

Under Pope Victor there arrived in Rome a rich Christian from Byzantium, named Theodotus.[1] He was called Theodotus the currier, because he had made his fortune by that industry. He was a learned man, and set himself to dogmatize. According to him, Jesus, except for his miraculous birth, was a man like other men. He grew up under ordinary conditions, manifesting a very high degree of sanctity. At His baptism, on the banks of the Jordan, the Christ, otherwise called the Holy Ghost, descended upon Him in the form of a dove: He thus received the power to work miracles. But He did not thus become God, and according to the Theodotians, this prerogative only became His after His resurrection, and only a section of them conceded even so much.

Victor did not hesitate to condemn such doctrines. Theodotus was excommunicated.[2] He persisted; and his adherents were sufficiently numerous to entertain the

[1] Information as to the two Theodoti and their sect is to be found in St Hippolytus: 1. *Syntagma* (Pseudo-Tert. 53; Epiphanius liv. lv.; Philastr. 50); cf. *Contra Noetum* 3; 2. *Philosophumena*, vii. 35; x. 23; 3. "The Little Labyrinth" (Eus., *H. E.* v. 28).

[2] Hippolytus relates that Theodotus apostatized at Byzantium, and put forward his doctrines as an excuse. He said, he had not renounced God: he had only renounced a man. This tale is hardly credible, because even from Theodotus' own point of view he had renounced the Saviour and Lord of all Christians, and his case would still have been extremely grave.

idea of organizing a Church of their own. Two disciples of the Byzantine (a second Theodotus, a banker by profession, and a certain Asclepiades) found a Roman confessor called Natalius, who, in return for a salary, consented to act as bishop in the new sect. But Natalius did not persist. He had visions, in which our Lord rebuked him severely. As he turned a deaf ear, "the holy angels," during the night, administered to him such a forcible chastisement, that as soon as day dawned, throwing himself at the feet of Pope Zephyrinus, the clergy, and the people, he sued for mercy. Finally they took pity on him, and he was re-admitted to communion. A little later there appeared (about 230?) another teacher of the Theodotian sect, a certain Artemon or Artemas, who seems to have lived long and made himself rather prominent.

So much for their external history. Their doctrine must be more closely examined. It appears from the summary given to us,[1] that the Theodotians, like Hermas, acknowledged a divine power called Christ, or the Holy Ghost, as well as God.[2] One special point which St Hippolytus emphasizes in the doctrine of Theodotus the banker, is the worship of Melchisedech. Melchisedech was identified by him with the Son of God, the Holy Spirit. This notion, suggested by a wrong interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is found also much later and in other quarters.[3] Combined with the theory that Christ was God only by adoption, this idea led them to place Him lower than Melchisedech. He, the Son of God, of course could not but stand higher than the good servant Christ, whose actions he controlled and whose advancement he regulated. Therefore, it was to Melchisedech that the sacrifice was offered. "Christ was chosen to call us from

[1] According to the *Philosophumena*.

[2] Except that Hermas does not use the term Christ, but Son of God.

[3] St Epiphanius attests this (*Haer.* lv. 5, 7); the author of the *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, who wrote in Rome in his time, took the Theodotian view (*P. L.*, vol. xxxv., p. 2329).

our devious ways to this knowledge; He was anointed and chosen by God, because He has turned us from idols, by showing us the way of truth."[1] This is exactly the work of the Saviour as described in the parable of Hermas.

Therefore, we are not much surprised to find this school tracing their parentage back to previous generations. The Theodotians contended that they were faithful to the ancient tradition, upheld in Rome till the time of Pope Victor, and only altered under Zephyrinus. This was, to begin with, untrue, because it was Victor himself who condemned the Theodotians. Besides, a number of ancient writers, such as Justin, Miltiades, Tatian, Clement, Irenæus, and Melito, had all insisted on the Divinity of Christ, declaring Him to be, at the same time, God and Man. From the beginning numbers of Christian hymns and canticles had, indeed, expressed the same belief,[2] but then these compositions either showed a simple belief in the Divinity of Christ, or explained it by the doctrine of the Logos, as taught by St John. And this did not exclude other ideas from being held here and there, though obscurely and without their being pressed. Also, we must not forget that, inadequate as it appears to us, the Theodotian theology found adherents down to the end of the 4th century, and that St Augustine,[3] almost on the eve of his conversion, still quite sincerely believed it to represent orthodox Christianity.

One peculiarity of this school is its familiarity with positive philosophy. Aristotle was held in great honour by the Theodotians, as were also Theophrastus, Euclid, and Galen. They studied logic and even abused it, by misapplying it to the Bible. When a matter-of-fact mind, averse to allegory, takes up biblical criticism, the outcome is often the mutilation and alteration of the sacred text. The Theodotians appear to have had the same Canon of Scripture as the Church; they did not, like the Alogi, exclude the writings of St John, although they

[1] Epiphanius lv. 8.
[2] *The Little Labyrinth*, in Eus. v. 28.
[3] *Confessions*, vii. 19.

must have found it awkward to reconcile them with their own doctrines. But their copies of the Scriptures had but little resemblance to the received text, and were not even all alike. We hear of those of Asclepiades, of Theodotus, of Hermophilus, and of Apollonides, all differing one from the other. The only traces left of this biblical criticism are found in the book to which we owe the above information—"The Little Labyrinth." It was specially directed against Artemas,[1] and there is strong evidence that it was written by Hippolytus, towards the end of his life. It was not the first time that the great Roman theologian had attacked the Theodotians. He had already made special allusion to them, first in his *Syntagma*, and afterwards in the *Philosophumena*.

The Alogi also came into collision with him. We have seen that this sect arose in Asia, when the Montanist prophets first appeared, and when the writings of St John were still of such recent origin that it was not altogether absurd to question their authority. The Alogi were specially concerned with the use or abuse the Phrygian enthusiasts made of the doctrine of the Paraclete and visions and prophesies. Their teaching does not appear to have affected Christology. St Irenæus had repudiated it. Hippolytus thought he ought to attack it. He did so in a book entitled *Defence of the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse*, a great part of which must be included in the chapter devoted to the Alogi[2] by St Epiphanius. These bitter foes of the Montanists had perhaps followed them to Rome, where just then the disciples of the Paraclete were very prominent. The Montanists had several leaders who did not always agree: one of them was a

[1] The fragments against Artemas, quoted by Eusebius with no author's name, and which Theodoret says (*Haeret. fab.* ii. 5) appeared in a book called *The Little Labyrinth*, seem to have been by Hippolytus. Photius (cod. 48) attributes to him (confounding him with Caius) a book *Against the Heresy of Artemas*. Besides, the title *Little Labyrinth* presupposes a Great Labyrinth, and this expression has been used to denote the *Philosophumena* as may be seen in the text of that work (x. 5).

[2] *Haer.* lv.

certain Æschines, and another was Proculus or Proclus,[1] much venerated by Tertullian.[2] Proclus wrote to push forward the claims of the new prophesying. He was answered by a Roman Christian named Caius,[3] who, in the course of his argument, was led to appeal to the tombs, in the Vatican and the Via Ostia, of the apostles Peter and Paul.[4] Caius' book was in dialogue form. It contained a very striking criticism of the Apocalypse which the author, like the Alogi, attributed to Cerinthus.[5] Hippolytus did not think he ought to let such an assertion pass. He answered Caius in some *Capita*, certain fragments of which have recently been discovered.[6]

But as early as these first years of the episcopate of Zephyrinus, Hippolytus was expending his energies in another controversy. The Theodotians, expelled by the Church, could only make a stir outside; whilst in the very heart of the Christian community a great controversy agitated both cultivated and uncultivated minds.

The aim was to reach some understanding as to what exactly the Divinity incarnate in Jesus Christ really was. Starting from the Johannine axiom, "the Word was made flesh," many writers, and especially the Apologists, began to study Philo's theory of the Logos. They found in that theory a means of reconciling their own faith with their philosophical education, and also a point of contact with

[1] Pseudo-Tert. 52, 53; cf. *Philosophumena*, viii. 19.

[2] *Adv. Valent.* 5; Proclus, see Eus. ii. 25; iii. 31; vi. 20.

[3] Photius (cod. 48) calls him a priest; but this may result from the confusion he makes between Caius and Hippolytus.

[4] Caius goes on: "Who founded this church."—*Translator's Note.*

[5] It does not seem that Caius extended his criticisms to the fourth Gospel. Eusebius (vi. 20), who paid great attention to biblical references, would not have allowed such an attitude to pass unnoticed.

[6] On Caius, see Eusebius iii. 28; vi. 20. The Nestorian Bishop, Ebed Jesu (14th century) gives a catalogue of the writings of Hippolytus, in which the "Chapters against Caius" are noticed as being distinct from the treatise, "Defence of the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse" (Assemani, *Bib. Or.*, vol. iii., p. 15). Mr Gwynn has recently discovered some fragments of these "Chapters" in an unpublished commentary upon the Apocalypse by Dionysius Bar Salibi. (See *Texte und Unt.*, vol. vi., p. 122 *et seq.*)

the educated hearers or readers, to whom they were defending Christianity. Celsus himself approved the doctrine of the Logos. But what exactly was the Logos? At bottom, in whatever form their thought clothed itself, the Logos was for them God revealing Himself externally, acting outside Himself, allowing Himself to be known, or making Himself known. God is ineffable, abstract, and unknowable: between Him and the world an intermediary was necessary. This intermediary could only be Divine: the Word proceedeth from God. All external action on the part of God must be attributed to Him, first the Creation, then the divine manifestations (theophanies) in the Old Testament, and at last the Incarnation.

What now is the relationship between the Word, the accessible God, and the Father, who is God inaccessible? This is the delicate point. The Word is of God, of the very Essence of the Father, ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς οὐσίας, (according to the phrase used later in the same sense in the Nicene Creed). Yet there is more than that to be said about Him. St Justin says crudely, He is another God. But neither this exaggerated expression, nor others as strong, which owing to the poverty of theological language these early writers used, should be taken in any sense which exceeds what we mean by the distinction of Persons. In this theory, what calls for criticism is rather, that the distinction of Persons is not conceived as eternal, as being a necessity of the inner life of God. The Platonizing Christians only need the Word to explain certain contingencies. Logically anterior to Creation, the Word was so chronologically as well: nothing more. The Greek term Logos, with its double meaning of Reason and Word, suggested a compromise. As Divine Reason or thought, the Word had always existed in the Bosom of God; as the Word, He came forth from it, in a particular manner and at a given moment. This idea is expressed more clearly by the terms "Word immanent" (Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) and "Word uttered" (Λογος προφορικός), which we meet with sometimes.

But, like all compromises between religion and philo-

sophy, this had its drawbacks. It was inspired essentially, and above all, by a theory of the universe quite foreign to Christian tradition, and which was worked out rather by genuine Platonists, the thinkers of the school of Philo, or specially by Gnostics of all kinds. The unity of the divine principle, the Monarchy as it was called, was only saved by a sort of distribution (*οἰκονομία*), organized like the Plerôma, to fill up the gap between the infinite and the finite. The Person of the Word alone here replaced a whole series of æons, archons, and demiurges. When once the world is there, when creation is accomplished, there were no more difficulties. The Creator Logos diffused Himself in His works, especially in Man; supplied him with wisdom according to his need; manifested Himself in the best philosophy of the Greeks, and in the prophets of Israel; and at last in Jesus, gave His supreme message. The theory went no farther. It was for the witness of the Church to supply the knowledge of that which is the foundation and characteristic of Christianity—salvation through Jesus Christ.

These defects and lacunæ explain the small amount of enthusiasm which the theology of the Logos roused, not only among the mass of Christians, but even in men like St Irenæus, with whom the one thing that carried weight was the tradition of the Church. God the Creator; Jesus, Son of God, the Saviour; these were the two poles between which the thought of the great Bishop of Lyons moved. It was not that he was ignorant of the various definitions mooted around him; but it was not by them that his mind was influenced. Irenæus was not the leader of a school; he was a leader of the Church. It is but natural that others of the clergy should have been of the same mind; and this brings us back to Rome, at the moment when the theology of the Logos came into collision with the opposition of Church authority.

The struggle did not, however, open with a direct attack. The theology of the Logos had first to meet the opposition of another school of theology. In Asia, in very early days, there were people who would not hear

of any intermediary between God and the world, especially in the work of redemption, and they declared that they knew but one God, He who was incarnate in Jesus Christ. According to them the names of Father and Son corresponded only to different aspects of the same Person, playing transitory parts,[1] and not to divine realities. This is what is called Modalism. The theorists of the Logos, who were so obviously Platonists, reproached their adversaries for being inspired by Heraclitus and Zeno. In reality, the Modalists had specially at heart the defence of the Divinity of the Saviour, and this gained for them at first a certain amount of sympathy. Unfortunately they bungled it, and had to be dropped.

This doctrine had already found its way to Rome in the days of Pope Eleutherus, when a confessor named Praxeas appeared there from Asia. The Roman Church, absorbed in the consideration of Montanus and his prophecies, and still hesitating to condemn, had almost decided not even to reprove, when Praxeas arrived with information such as changed the wind at once, and the decision was given against the Phrygians. Praxeas was a Modalist. His doctrines spread so much that Tertullian said of him that in Rome he had done two diabolical works: "He had put to flight the Paraclete, and crucified the Father." This last shaft soon brought the new doctrine into ridicule. It exposed pretty clearly one outcome of the doctrine quite contrary to Scripture. The Modalists were called Patripassians. The doctrine of Praxeas spread also in Carthage, favoured, says Tertullian, by the simplicity of the people. But they found an opponent, no doubt Tertullian himself. He denounced them to the authorities of the Church, and Praxeas was obliged, not only to promise amendment, but also to sign a document acknowledging his error.[2] He was effectually silenced.

About the same time, at Smyrna, a certain Noëtus,

[1] Compare this with the analogous ideas which St Justin opposed in his dialogue with Trypho, c. 128.

[2] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* i.

whose name also gave rise to many witticisms,[1] was arraigned before "the priests" of Smyrna for the same kind of teaching, and reprimanded. He complicated the situation by calling himself Moses, and his brother Aaron, an odd proceeding behind which probably lurked undue pretensions. At first he defended himself successfully. But as he persisted in holding forth, dogmatized, and gathered a group of disciples round him, he was once more called before the presbyteral college. This time he was more explicit and affirmed significantly that, after all, he did no harm by teaching a doctrine which enhanced the glory of Jesus Christ: "I know but one God;" he said, "it is no other than He who was born, who suffered, and who died." Noëtus was excommunicated.[2]

Thus the Modalist doctrines had been twice condemned, at Carthage and at Smyrna, before they tried their fortunes in Rome for the second time. A disciple of Noëtus, called Epigonus, came and opened a school there; but he was soon replaced as head by a certain Cleomenes, who, in his turn, was succeeded, a little later on, by Sabellius. There was already a Theodotian school in Rome which had even become a church. The Modalist teachers were much opposed to the Theodotians. Probably after the checks they had met with in Africa and Asia, they had the good sense to soften down whatever was most startling in their language. And they were well received at first by the general run of believers, who suspected no evil, and even by the Bishop Zephyrinus, who was but little versed in the subtleties of theology, and was above all careful, as in duty bound, for the peace of the Church. He left the Modalist teachers and their school alone. They laid special stress on the term *Monarchy*, which meant much the same as "consubstantiality" (a term of later use), and which denoted the most rigorous Monotheism. Monarchy was the one thing talked about. The Gnostics, we have seen, introduced this

[1] Νοητός signifies intelligible; but ἀνόητος means fool.

[2] Hippolytus, *Contra Noëtum* i. (*cf.* Epiphanius, *Haer.* lvii.); *Philosophumena* ix. 7.

system into their Plerôma; and Marcionism had developed on the same lines, under the direction of Apelles. Popular orthodoxy willingly joined this movement; they were always ready to defend the "holy monarchy." Even the Montanists could not keep out of it; some of them, led by Æschines, enrolled themselves under the banner of Modalist theology. Others, however, with Proclus at their head, maintained a different attitude.

But the common enemy was the theology of the Logos,[1] defended by Hippolytus in Rome, by Tertullian in Africa. The orthodox accused it of introducing two Gods. It required, indeed, some education in philosophy, and moreover some sympathy, not to see in the Logos, as presented by them, a second God, distinct from the true God and inferior to Him. But how was it possible to avoid this Charybdis, without falling into the Scylla of Patripassianism? Zephyrinus, good man, at last did not know which way to turn: he was quite ready to say with Noëtus and his people, "I know one God only, Jesus Christ, and beside Him no other who has died or suffered." But he added: "It was not the Father who died, it was the Son." This was but to repeat the very terms requiring to be reconciled, the traditional axioms as to Divine Unity, the Incarnation, and the distinction between the Father and the Son. Zephyrinus was acting up to his position in upholding tradition; but he could not solve the enigmas it involved.

Hippolytus, who had a solution of his own and could not succeed in getting his bishop to accept it, grew more and more exasperated. His anger was quick to recognise behind Zephyrinus his adviser Callistus. When, therefore, Zephyrinus was dead, and Callistus was chosen to succeed him, Hippolytus hesitated no longer. He raised a cry of

[1] It may seem surprising that people who acknowledged the fourth Gospel should feel such repugnance to a system so closely allied to it. Their reply was: "It is odd of you to give the name of Word to the Son. John does it, no doubt, but he was in the habit of allegorizing." Hippolytus, *Contra Noët.* 15.

scandal, and with some of his adherents separated himself from the Church. This serious step caused a great deal of commotion. Callistus could not allow it to be said that Hippolytus and his followers had separated from him because he patronised false doctrines: he condemned Sabellius for heresy.[1] But neither could he allow Hippolytus to impose his theology upon him. The theologian, therefore, found himself in the pitiful position of leader of a schismatic Church, and there he remained, even under Urban and Pontian, the successors of Callistus.

His bitterness came out in the book which we erroneously call the *Philosophumena*. It was a refutation of all doctrinal systems opposed to Christian orthodoxy; orthodoxy being adjusted, needless to say, to the point of view of the author. The subject is dealt with in nine books, followed by a tenth book of recapitulation. The first four books are devoted to the philosophies or mythologies of the Greeks and Barbarians; then come the various Gnostic sects, and other Christian heresies down to Noëtus and Callistus; and finally the Elkesaites[2] and the Jews. This was not the first time that Hippolytus had combated heresies. At least twenty years before he had drawn up a list of heretic leaders, beginning with Dositheus[3] and ending with Noëtus as the thirty-second of the series. This work, called the *Syntagma*, is lost, but almost the whole of it is included in St Epiphanius' compilation.[4] Hippolytus there sets forth their various systems, and then following St Irenæus, refutes them, whilst discussing their arguments and interpretations. In the *Philosophumena* the method employed is entirely different. He couples every heresy with some philosophical or pagan system, previously refuted, or scoffed

[1] Τὸν Σαβέλλιον ἀπέωσεν ὡς μὴ φρονοῦντα ὀρθῶς.

[2] See above, p. 95.

[3] See above, p. 116.

[4] We meet with it again in the book on heresies by Philaster, and also in the appendix to the *Prescriptions* of Tertullian (Praescr. 45-53). The conclusion has been preserved by itself, under the form of a homily against Noëtus.

at—for the author is a master of invective. Hippolytus had never been conspicuous for mildness, but between the *Syntagma* and the *Labyrinth* his character had embittered considerably. The mere mention of Callistus makes him furious, and what he says of him is, therefore, not to be relied on. It is not sufficient to put aside his malicious interpretations; even the facts, as given by him, cannot be accepted without reserve.[1]

Hence, it is difficult to take the doctrinal statement that Hippolytus gives, as really representing the teaching of Callistus. "There is but one divine spirit, called by various names, Logos, Father, and Son. This last term applies to the Incarnation. The Son is the visible Being, the Man. Become Divine by the Incarnation, he is identical with the Father; therefore the Father and the Son are one God, one Person only, and not two. Therefore the Father shared the sufferings of the Son, for we must not say that the Father suffered."

Tertullian[2] was acquainted with this doctrine of the "compassion" (co-suffering), but he does not attribute it to Callistus, and his book against Praxeas was perhaps

[1] Other documents, about which it is necessary to exercise some reserve, are those (concerning different sects) which arose out of this same book, the *Philosophumena;* they seem to betray the same origin, and perhaps the hand of a forger. It is therefore wise to regard with some suspicion their statements as to the Naassenes, the Peratae, the Sethians, and Justin the Gnostic; and what they add to the previous traditions about Simon, Basilides, and the Docetae. See Salmon, in *Hermathena*, 1885, p. 389; Stähelin, in *Texte und Unt.*, vol. vi. (3).

[2] *Adv. Praxeam* 27: "Obducti distinctione Patris et Filii quam manente coniunctione disponimus . . . aliter ad suam nihilominus sententiam interpretari conantur ut aeque in una persona utrumque distinguant Patrem et Filium, dicentes Filium carnem esse, id est hominem, id est Jesum; Patrem autem spiritum, id est Deum, id est Christum. Et qui unum eumdemque contendunt Patrem et Filium iam incipiunt dividere illos potius quam unare." . . . 29: "Nec compassus est Pater Filio; sic enim directam blasphemiam in Patrem veriti, diminui eam hoc modo sperant, concedentes iam Patrem et Filium duos esse, si Filius quidem patitur, Pater vero compatitur. Stulti et in hoc. Quid est enim compati quam cum alio pati?"

written before his episcopate. It seems pretty evident that we have here a sort of evolution of Modalist doctrine. The rather crude Patripassianism, of earlier times, being threatened by the attitude of Zephyrinus and Callistus, it may have been thought advisable to amend it.

But the improvement is but slight, and it is not easy to understand how after condemning Sabellius, Callistus could have accepted this. But controversialists are always inclined to distort the opinions they denounce, and to try to compromise their adversaries, by connecting them with mischievous doctrines. Still it is, of course, quite possible that in the orthodox camp the distrust of the theology of the Logos, the fear of Di-theism,[1] and the all-absorbing care for the doctrine of the Divine Unity, combined with the imperfection of technical language, may have led, occasionally, to ill-founded notions and to the employment of expressions open to criticism.

In spite of the passionate asseverations of Hippolytus, two things on his own showing are certain: first, that Callistus condemned Sabellius; and secondly, that he did not condemn Hippolytus. Hippolytus went off of his own accord. And, whatever distrust it inspired, the theology he represented escaped a formal condemnation. In the next generation it was openly professed by the Roman priest Novatian. It still had followers, far into the 4th century. But none of them, neither Novatian nor the later representatives of this theory, were in the main stream of thought which led up to the orthodoxy of the Nicene Creed. That did not grow out of the theology of the Logos, as formulated by the apologists, and later, by Hippolytus and Tertullian; but rather from the simple religious belief of early days, defended—rather than explained—by St Irenæus, formulated—more or less—by the Popes Zephyrinus and Callistus, and soon to find in their successor Dionysius an interpreter quite equal to his subject.

[1] Hippolytus (*Philosophumena*, ix. 11) complains of having been treated as a Di-theist by Callistus: ἀπεκάλει ἡμᾶς διθέους.

It was not only for his teaching that Hippolytus fell foul of Callistus. The anti-pope accused him with equal bitterness of relaxing the bonds of Church discipline.

According to Hippolytus, Callistus declared that no sin was too grave for absolution, and eagerly welcomed back into the Church offenders whom even the sects rejected; he would not allow the deposition of peccant bishops; he admitted to orders men who had married more than once; he allowed the clergy to marry; and also tolerated secret marriages between Roman ladies of good family and men of low standing. In these accusations it is not always easy to distinguish between false statements and malicious interpretations of real facts.[1] On the first point, the testimony of Hippolytus is confirmed in part by Tertullian, who published his book *De Pudicitia*, as a protest against a solemn declaration of the Pope, evidently Callistus, as to the absolution, not as Hippolytus says, of all sinners, but of a certain class of sinner. For some time, the Church had held that the excommunication of apostates, homicides, and adulterers should be perpetual. Callistus relaxed this severity in cases of adultery and the like: "I learn," says Tertullian, "that a peremptory edict has just been issued. The Pontifex Maximus, the Bishop of bishops, has spoken. 'I,' he says, 'I remit sins of adultery and fornication to whosoever shall have done penance for them.'" Then follows one of his most cutting and sarcastic invectives. The rigorists of all the schools, the Montanists, and the Hippolytians, were much scandalized. It does not follow that they were right. Moreover, in stipulating that the repentant sinners should do penance, Callistus was not offering them very attractive terms. We can judge of this from Tertullian's own words. This is the description, or rather, the caricature, which he gives of the reconciliation of a penitent: "Thou dost introduce," he says, addressing the Pope, "thou dost introduce into the Church, the penitent adulterer, who comes to make supplication to the assembly of the brethren. Behold him then: clothed in a hair-shirt, covered with ashes, in a sad plight,

[1] On this subject, see De Rossi, *Bull.*, 1866, p. 23-33, 65-67.

a spectacle to excite horror in the hearts of all present. He prostrates himself in the midst of the congregation, before the widows, before the priests; he seizes the fringe of their garments, he kisses their footprints, he takes hold of their knees. In the meantime thou dost harangue the people, thou dost excite the pity of the public for the sad fate of the suppliant. O good Shepherd, O blessed Pope, thou dost relate the parable of the lost sheep, in order that thy lost goat may be returned to thee; thou dost promise that henceforth he shall never wander from the fold again. . . ."

Happily for his reputation, Hippolytus wrote other things beside his pamphlets. His exegetical work is considerable. It extends over all the books of the Bible, from Genesis to the Apocalypse. But he seldom comments on the whole of a book as he does on the prophecy of Daniel. Besides his exegetical treatises, he also wrote on Anti-Christ, on the origin of evil, on the substance of the universe, on the resurrection: this last book was dedicated to the Empress Mammea. We have seen with what heat he attacked heretics in general, and those of his own time in particular; he wrote a special book against the Marcionites. He also appears to have taken up the question of Church discipline: his name is claimed for many later compilations, which must, more or less, have been inspired by him. The Paschal Question also attracted his attention. He treated it in a general way, in his book on Easter. He afterwards undertook to save Christians from being dependent on the calculations of the Jews by drawing up Paschal tables himself, founded on a cycle of eight years. This cycle was imperfect: the new calculation was soon out of harmony with astronomical facts, and had to be abandoned. But for the moment his discovery was considered marvellous. A statue was erected to Hippolytus by people of his own sect, and still exists.[1] The theologian is shown seated on a chair upon the sides of which his famous tables appear. A little behind them is a catalogue of his writings. To

[1] Found in the 16th century near his tomb; it is now in the Lateran Museum. The head is modern.

judge by the starting-point of the cycle, this monument belongs to the year 222, the year in which Callistus died.[1]

The last work of Hippolytus seems to have been his book of *Chronicles;* a few fragments or adaptations of it still remain, in various languages, for it was very widely read. Hippolytus brought it down to the last year of Alexander Severus (235 A.D.). It contained, among other things, very interesting geographical descriptions.[2]

Some of these writings are earlier than his schism, but a good many of them, notably the works of calculation and chronology, belong to the time when Hippolytus claimed the position of head of the Roman Church, in opposition

[1] At the time of Constantine, Callistus was numbered amongst the Martyr-Popes. In the Philocalian table of *Depositiones Martyrum*, of 336, his name is commemorated on the 14th of October with those of Pontian, Fabian, Cornelius, and Xystus II. Two of these were executed (Fabian and Xystus II.); the two others died in exile. Nothing similar is recorded of Callistus. He died in the reign of Alexander Severus, under whom it is hardly probable that there were any martyrs. Efforts have therefore been made to connect the story of his exile to Sardinia, as related by Hippolytus, with the honours paid to him after his death. But this connection is impossible. The death of Callistus did not happen until at least thirty-three years after his trial, and more than thirty years after his return from exile. Now we see in the Philocalian tables that Lucius, who was exiled and died directly after his return from exile, was not counted among the Martyr-Popes. Therefore temporary exile was not considered sufficient to give the title of martyr. As the evidence is thus conflicting, we may suppose, as a hypothetical solution, that Callistus perished in some squabble between Christians and pagans, without any regular trial. During the first half of the 4th century his memory was localized in Rome in two places: in the Trastevere, where Pope Julius erected a basilica (Santa Maria in Trastevere) *iuxta Callistum;* and at his tomb on the Via Aurelia. It is strange that he should have been buried there, so far from the cemetery he superintended, which has always borne his name and where all his colleagues of the 3rd century are buried. If it were true that he died in a popular tumult, and if we accept the legend that it happened in the Trastevere, that would explain why he was buried on the Via Aurelia. It would be the nearest to the place where he was put to death.

[2] For long it was believed to contain a list of popes. When the Greek text was discovered this was found to be a mistake (A. Bauer, *Texte und Unt.*, 1905, xxix., p. 156).

to the legitimate Popes, Callistus, Urban, and Pontian. Their differences were healed by persecution. After the peaceful years of Alexander Severus, the accession of Maximin the Thracian brought back the evil days. The new severities were specially aimed at the clergy. In Rome, the heads of both parties, Pontian, the legitimate Bishop, and Hippolytus, the anti-Pope, were arrested. Both were condemned to the mines of Sardinia. Drawn together by the miseries of their prison, the two confessors finally became reconciled. Hippolytus himself, in his last moments, exhorted his followers to unite themselves with the rest of the faithful. His schism did not survive him. When peace was once more restored to the Church, his body was brought back to Rome with that of Pontian, who also died in that pestilential island. They were buried on the same day, Aug. 13—Pontian in the cemetery of Callistus among the popes, Hippolytus in a crypt on the Via Tiburtina. His friends were allowed to erect his statue there.[1] The honour paid to the martyr finally effaced the remembrance of his schism. A century later, Damasus recognised Hippolytus as a martyr; he had also heard it said that he had returned to the Church after taking part in a schism; but having only a very vague notion as to what this schism was, he identified it with that of Novatian.[2]

The writings of Hippolytus, which ought to have kept alive his memory, were soon lost sight of in Rome. In the next generation, the Roman clergy spoke and wrote in Latin. In the East, the title of Bishop of Rome, which Hippolytus had assumed on the title-page of his works, caused much perplexity to the learned, as they could not find his name in any list of bishops. Eusebius does

[1] Hippolytus had perhaps lived there.

[2] Prudentius, *Peristeph.* xi., takes his information from the inscription of Damasus *Hippolytus fertur* (Ihm. No. 37), but he confounds the martyr of the Via Tiburtina with another martyr Hippolytus, surnamed Nonnus, commemorated at Porto on August 22, and embellishes their combined history with incidents borrowed from the legend of Hippolytus, the son of Theseus.

not know where he had been bishop; and what is still stranger, nor do St Jerome and Rufinus.[1] Pope Gelasius (*c.* 495) by a strange perversion assigns to him the See of Bostra.[2] Others,[3] less familiar with the history of the popes, accept the title of Bishop of Rome, without troubling themselves about the discrepancy such an assumption involved. Later still,[4] when the legend of another martyr, Hippolytus, buried at Porto, came to light, they put things straight by saying that Hippolytus, the author, had been Bishop of the Port of Rome.

In Rome itself, at any rate, Hippolytus retained the title of Roman Priest, both in history and in the memorials in the Office. He is so called in the *Liber pontificalis*. And towards the end of the 6th century he was thus represented, with suitable accessories, in a mosaic of the basilica of San Lorenzo. But a strange romance about the Decian persecution was already in circulation; the episodes travel from Babylon to Rome, and put upon the scene every kind of martyr, some Roman, others Persian; some authentic, the others imaginary. Hippolytus appears in these stories. He is represented as a subordinate of the Prefect of Rome, and in that capacity has charge of St Lawrence as prisoner; then he is converted and dies a martyr's death, with his nurse Concordia, and eighteen other persons. A most singular transformation![5]

The Emperor Maximin was dethroned in 236, and put to death the following year. His edicts against the Christians cannot have been long in force; the Roman Church regained the peace she had enjoyed since the

[1] Eusebius vi. 20, 22; Hier. *De viris* 61; Rufinus, *H. E.* vi. 16.

[2] Thiel, *Epp. Rom. Pontif.*, p. 545. It appears that Gelasius is here depending on a Greek document. See the work of L. Saltet on the sources of the *Eranistes* of Theodoret, published in the *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* of Louvain, 1905, p. 516 *et seq.*

[3] Apollinaris (Mai. *Script. Vet.*, vol. i., p. 173).

[4] Already in the Paschal Chronicle (*c.* 640).

[5] Hippolytus still appears in the Roman Breviary, and in the Martyrology, with this history attached to him.

reign of Caracalla. Anteros succeeded the exiled Pope Pontian, but only for a few weeks. Fabian followed him, and held the See until the Decian persecution. He is known as the constructor of certain buildings in the cemeteries of Rome, and as having assigned the different regions of the city to the seven deacons.[1] This, no doubt, was the origin of the ecclesiastical divisions, the official zones of clerical and of religious administration, which were retained in Rome for many centuries. Serious trouble in the African Church called for Fabian's intervention outside his own See; the deposition of Privatus, Bishop of Lambesis. Origen also addressed to him a memorial justifying himself as to the accusations brought against his doctrine.[2] The science of theology continued to be cultivated in Rome. Instead of Hippolytus, a new teacher was heard—Novatian.

Some of his writings are still extant, and they are in Latin: for the time has come when the Roman Church changed its language and substituted Latin for Greek.[3] Novatian's chief work is a treatise on the Trinity, refuting the Gnostics, the Theodotians, and the Sabellians. It takes the shape of an exposition on the three chief articles of the Creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty . . . and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son . . . and in the Holy Ghost." The author displays a profound knowledge of Holy Scripture; his reasoning is concise, his explanations clear, and his conceptions sufficiently exact. Coming after so many controversialists, he profited by their labours. In consequence, his theory of the Trinity,[4] whilst supporting the Western theory of the double state of the Logos, is much more exact and complete than any

[1] Liberian Catalogue; *Hic regiones divisit diaconibus et multas fabricas per cymiteria fieri iussit.* With regard to his miraculous election, see Eusebius v. 29.

[2] On these two questions, see chapters xix. and xx.

[3] Nevertheless, the original epitaphs of the popes continued to be in Greek. Those of Anteros, Fabian, Lucius, and Gaius (†296) have been preserved. That of Cornelius, which is in Latin, appears to be later than the 3rd century.

[4] This term never appears in the text of Novatian.

of its predecessors.[1] But Novatian is not only a theologian; he is also a master of rhetoric, careful and elaborate in style, he develops his subject artistically, and he gives his readers an occasional rest from dry study by magnificent flights of eloquence.

Like Hippolytus, Novatian was a priest of the Roman Church. Perhaps he exercised functions similar to those of the catechists of Alexandria and the theologian priests of Africa; they, besides the instruction of catechumens, had also the charge of the young readers.[2] The elevation of Novatian to the priesthood had met with some opposition. The clergy did not like him. His talent had undoubtedly made him many enemies. At this inopportune moment it was remembered that he had not been baptized according to the ordinary form, but during an illness, and with only the abridged form used in such cases. However, whether the majority was, as a whole, favourable to him, or whether Bishop Fabian took a special interest in the introduction of so distinguished a man to his presbyteral college, these objections were overlooked. In ordinary circumstances, Novatian might indeed have been most useful, but his talent as an orator, and his learning, which attracted much admiration in some circles, had rather filled him with conceit. He had not a very strong head; the persecution which was approaching, and especially the ecclesiastical crisis which it caused, revealed that he was wanting in strength of character.[3]

[1] Note, however, that later this theory was not considered orthodox. Arnobius the younger (dialogue of Arnobius and Serapion i. 11; Migne, *P. L.*, vol. liii., p. 256) when he wishes to give a specimen of the Arian doctrine, quotes the principal phrases of the last chapter of Novatian, but of course without giving the name of the author.

[2] Cyprian, ep. xxix.

[3] Letter of Cornelius to Fabius of Antioch (Eusebius vi. 43).

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OF ALEXANDRIA

Egypt under the Greeks and Romans. The beginnings of Egyptian Christianity. The Alexandrian School. Pantænus. Clement and his writings. Christian Gnosticism. Origen's first appearance and teaching in Alexandria. Rupture with Bishop Demetrius. Origen in Cæsarea. His literary activity and end. Origen's writings. The doctrinal synthesis of the *First Principles*.

WHEN the Romans took possession of Egypt, many thousands of years had passed since the first corn was sown in the mud of the Nile, and harvested in the spring, under the intense heat of a pitiless sun. The long monotonous history of Egypt is that of a people over-much governed. The ancient native dynasties were followed successively by Persian administrators, Macedonian kings, and Roman viceroys: the government changed hands, but never its form and efficiency.

Long before Alexander, the Greeks of Miletus had a colony at Naucratis, on the western arm of the Nile; but Egyptian Hellenism really began only with the Macedonian conquest. It was a Hellenism quite peculiar to itself, essentially military and monarchical; literary, certainly, but above all, commercial. Alexandria was its sanctuary. Founded by the hero, whose tomb it held, it became the residence of kings descended from his companion-at-arms, Ptolemy, the son of Lagus. The Museum of Alexandria, that great focus of study and instruction, organised on the model of the Greek literary associations, soon became the centre of all Greek intellectual

life, the headquarters of the philosophers, thinkers, poets, artists, and mathematicians of the world. Through the haven of Alexandria, sheltered by the isle of Pharos, the world's merchantmen gained access to the treasures of Egypt, which, till then, had been a closed country, a sort of China. Thence radiated into the far interior, a swarm of Greek merchants, adventurers, and officials. They obtained a footing almost everywhere, mingled with the native population, and produced a hybrid Egypto-Hellenic race, who formed a link between pure Hellenism and old Egyptian thought. As a matter of course, Egypt soon re-acted on her conquerors. The result of all these influences was a mixed population, very active and industrious, strong to endure, and, as a rule, docile, if managed with a firm hand.

On August 1, 30 B.C., Alexandria fell into the hands of Octavius;[1] and Egypt, with its immemorial past, became a Roman province, or, to speak more correctly, the emperor's private domain, governed direct by creatures of Cæsar, for the benefit of his private purse.

A prefect—a Roman knight of the lower order—represented the emperor, who appointed two or three other officials, such as the judge of Alexandria, and the president of the Museum. Everything else was in the hands of the prefect, who, on behalf of the emperor, officiated in place of the Pharaohs in the religious ceremonies.[2]

Elsewhere, the Romans had always favoured and encouraged the development of municipal institutions. In

[1] An official festival was instituted to celebrate this event; it was continued, in the Christian calendar, as a festival dedicated to the Maccabees and to St Peter *ad Vincula*, on August 1. On Roman Egypt, see Lumbroso, *L'Egitto al tempo dei Greci e dei Romani*, Rome, 1882.

[2] He also commanded the army. In Egypt, the commanders of legions were not, as elsewhere, legates of senatorial rank, or they could not have been subordinate to a knight, not of the higher class, like the Egyptian prefect. They were *praefecti castrorum*. Augustus forbade senators, or knights of high rank, to live in Egypt. He dared not allow men of such importance to be in surroundings so conducive to ambitious designs.

Egypt, where they found no fully organised cities, with elections, council, and magistrates, they left things as they were. Alexandria itself was only a crowd under control, not an organic body of citizens. It acquired a council or a senate, for the first time under Septimius Severus, but no magistrates. It was the same with Ptolemaïs, in Upper Egypt. The only exception was Antinoé, organized as a city, by the Emperor Hadrian. The rest of the country was divided into *nomes*, a system which dated from remote antiquity. The Egyptians, properly so-called, were excluded from the Roman community. They could not become Roman citizens, without being first naturalized as Alexandrians, and that was not very easy to accomplish. Even after Septimius Severus and Caracalla, the Egyptians continued to form an inferior caste in the empire, and they never appear to have regained their proper position. The national language, Egyptian or Coptic, which had several dialects, was preserved in the country, in the small towns, and even among the lower classes in large towns.

As to religion, the Greek legends did not count for much; at most, they may have supplied some ornamental additions to the old national cult, which was too solidly established on Egyptian soil to yield to strange gods. In Alexandria itself, the enormous temple of Serapis dominated the bustle of Greek commerce, from the height of its artificial hill. The gods of the Nile were conquering the conquerors. The Ptolemys had to become the high-priests of the religion they had inherited from the Pharaohs.

There was, however, one protest. Israel had returned to Egypt, and formed, in Alexandria, an important community, amounting to a third of the whole population. They were far from being treated as enemies. The Jews had their chief, or Ethnarch, and their national council; they enjoyed complete religious liberty. Nevertheless, in this strange land, they finally forgot their own tongue, and the Holy Scriptures had to be translated for them. The vicinity of the Museum drew them to literature. Under this influence arose Philo's exegesis, threatening to dissipate in philosophic dreams the old religion of the people of

God. In Alexandria there grew up also that literature of a Jewish and Monotheist propaganda, in which pseudo-sibyls and apocryphal poets pitted their wits, to their hearts' content, against the gods, the sacrifices, and the temples.

The origin of Christianity in Egypt is extremely obscure, it is not mentioned in the New Testament; the only native of Alexandria mentioned there is Apollos, and he plays rather an insignificant part in St Paul's time, as an itinerant missionary, not in his own country, but in Asia and in Greece.[1] The only book in early Christian literature which appears to have originated there is the Gospel according to the Egyptians. Valentinus, Basilides, and Carpocrates are the first Christians of Egypt whose names appear in history.[2] From Alexandria the female teacher, Marcellina, came to Rome, in the time of Pope Anicetus. There Apelles fled, after his quarrel with Marcion; and it was from thence that he returned with his clairvoyante Philomena. But we must not conclude that these heretical manifestations represent the whole of Alexandrian Christianity. These schools, precisely because they are only schools, imply a Church, "the great Church," as Celsus says; these very aberrations, precisely because they bear the names of their authors, testify to the existence of orthodox Church tradition. And in Egypt, as elsewhere, this rested on episcopal organisation. In his Chronicle, published 221 A.D., Julius Africanus inserts the names of ten bishops, who had held the See

[1] It is possible, but not certain, that some of the apostolic letters —the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of Barnabas, for instance—may have some connection with Alexandrian Christianity. The famous Therapeutae, who are described in a book, *The Contemplative Life*, attributed, rightly or wrongly to Philo, have nothing to do with primitive Christianity. On this book, the enigma of which still remains to be solved, see Schürer, *Gesch. des jüdischen Volkes*, 4th ed., vol. iii., p. 535.

[2] St Justin (Apol. i. 29) speaks of a young Christian of Alexandria, who lived in the time of the Prefect of Egypt, Felix; see below, p. 348.

before Demetrius,[1] the bishop of his own day. Demetrius became bishop about 189. Before him, the chronologist gives the names of Anianus, Abilius, Cerdo, Primus, Justus, Eumenes, Marcus, Celadion, Agrippinus, and Julian. The length of his episcopate is subjoined to the name of each bishop; but these figures are of no interest, as, even supposing the resulting chronological table to be correct, no incident belonging to the time has survived.[2] One tradition—reported by Eusebius[3] in the 4th century, and reproduced by him without corroboration—says that the Evangelist Mark first preached the Gospel in Egypt, and founded churches in Alexandria. In a place called Boucolia, to the east of the town, a sanctuary was shown, where reposed the body of the apostle, and of the bishops, his successors.[4]

The history of the Church in Alexandria is, however, rather obscure, even in the time of Bishop Demetrius, whose long episcopate corresponds with those of the Popes, Victor, Zephyrinus, Callistus, and Urban. The celebrated catechetical school is the feature that stands out most prominently.

In Rome, we have already heard of many schools of transcendental exegesis and theology. The Church had difficulties with several, and had to condemn them. But not always; and even when it came to a rupture, the school was not condemned as a school, but as the organ of a mischievous propaganda. In other words, the Church did not censure theology, but only bad theology.

[1] On this subject, see Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 202. The list of Julius Africanus is compiled from indications in Eusebius.

[2] These figures, taken together, amount to 128 years; they begin, therefore, about the year 61 A.D.

[3] ii. 16.

[4] *Acta S. Petri Alex.* (Migne, *P. G.*, vol. xviii., p. 461; *cf.* Lumbroso, *L'Egitto al tempo dei Greci e dei Romani*, Rome, 1882, p. 185. If Mark the Evangelist is identified with "John, whose surname was Mark," mentioned in the Acts, and in the Epistles of St Paul and St Peter, the Alexandrian tradition has to meet the serious objection that Dionysius of Alexandria (Eusebius vii. 25) refers to his history, without betraying the least suspicion that he had any connection with the Egyptian metropolis.

If such institutions could exist in Rome, in such matter-of-fact surroundings, how much more in Alexandria, that great centre of learning and critical literature, under the shadow of the Museum, the home of Hellenic wisdom, within reach of the celebrated Library, face to face with the ancient Jewish schools, where the memory of Philo still lived on, and with the new Gnostic schools, where such men as Basilides and Carpocrates were shining lights. Christianity, which drew so many converts from among people of cultivation, could not but be affected by their claims, and adapt itself, in some measure, to their habits of mind. Yet we have no reason to think that it did so very readily. The orthodox catechetical School at the time of the Emperor Commodus, shows no sign of being founded by one of the ancient bishops. Though finally accepted as an institution of the Alexandrian Church, and made available for the instruction of catechumens, it appears, like its Roman counterparts, to have sprung from the efforts of private individuals.

We must not forget that an immense majority of the population of Alexandria was industrial and commercial, and that the Museum enlightened Hellenism as a whole, rather than its own immediate surroundings. Even in Alexandria, the great mass of Christians could have been but little concerned with speculative thought. The catechetical School could never have interested more than a restricted number of cultivated minds. The rest distrusted rather than admired it. And this was the general tendency. Greek culture itself was already under a cloud. The Gnostics had made it the inspiring force of their interpretation of Christian teaching[1] with lamentable results, as the Alexandrian Christians knew by experience. This puts the actual value of this famous theological School in its true light.

Its earliest teachers are unknown. The first whose memory has survived, Pantænus, was a converted Stoic,

[1] On this subject, see de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, p. 126 *et seq.* Cf. *Strom.* i. 1, 18, 19, 43, 99; vi. 80, 89, 93, etc.

a native of Sicily.[1] He went, we are told, to preach the Gospel to the "Indians," and is said to have found they had a Gospel in the Hebrew tongue, brought by the Apostle Bartholomew.[2] On his return to Alexandria, he took over the management of the School, and numbered among his disciples Clement, his future successor, and Alexander, who afterwards became bishop of the churches in Cappadocia and Jerusalem. Nothing of his has been preserved. Although Eusebius speaks of his writings, it does not appear that any of them were ever published.[3]

It is quite otherwise with Clement, his successor; a sufficient number of his writings remain, to give an idea of the probable teaching of the Alexandrian School, during the last twenty years of the 2nd century.

T. Flavius Clemens, as his name indicates, was probably descended from some freedman of the Christian consul of that name. He began life as a heathen.[4] After his conversion, he followed the teaching of several masters in succession, whom he enumerates in a passage of his *Stromata*[5] without naming them—a Greek of Ionia, another of Magna Græcia, a third of Cœle Syria (Antioch?), an Egyptian, an Assyrian (Tatian?), and a converted Palestinian Jew. Finally, he met Pantænus in Egypt, and, with him, found rest for his soul.

The School of Alexandria was exactly the environment he was seeking, and which suited him. There the wisdom of ancient Greece was not considered an accursed thing, nor was it treated with indifference. There, men believed, as Justin did, that it contained a kind of illumination from the Divine Logos adored by Christians in Jesus Christ.

[1] For Pantænus, see Eusebius, *H. E.*, v. 10, 11 (*cf.* Clement, *Strom.* i. 11); vi. 13, 14, 19.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 10, is not very sure about all this. Εἰς Ἰνδοὺς ἐλθεῖν λέγεται, ἔνθα λόγος εὑρεῖν αὐτόν. The words India and Indians were then somewhat vague; they may just as well refer to Yemen or Abyssinia, as to Hindustan. *Cf.* above, p. 92.

[3] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 10; *cf.* Clem., *Strom.* i. 1, 11 *et seq.*; *Eclog.* 27.

[4] Eusebius, *Praep.* ii. 2, 14.

[5] *Strom.* i. 1, 11.

There religious learning was cultivated in this broad spirit, not only with a view to apologetics, but as a means of perfecting the individual. It was an orthodox Gnosticism: it did not concern itself with the mysteries of the Creator, nor was it led astray in foolish dreams of the Pleroma, or the eccentricities of impracticable asceticism; but still like the other Gnosticism, it assured its followers of a position of privilege among the rest of the faithful. There were elements in the religious life of a Gnostic Christian, unknown to the general run of believers. He did not work out his salvation as others did; he knew more; his moral ideal was higher than theirs.

As with Valentinus and Basilides this advanced teaching was justified by a special tradition, "The Lord, after his resurrection, had confided the hidden knowledge to James the Just, to John, and to Peter, who communicated it to other apostles, and these again to the Seventy, of whom Barnabas[1] was one." Through Pantænus, it reached Clement. We do not know exactly when Clement succeeded his master in the direction of the catechetical School. He was already known as a writer before the time of Pope Victor—that is, roughly speaking, about the time that Irenæus finished his great work.[2] Perhaps his *Protreptic*, still preserved, belongs to this first period, and possibly also the eight books of *Hypotyposes*, of which we have only fragments. Of this last work, Eusebius[3] speaks with reserve, and confines himself to the enumeration of the sacred books, authentic or disputed, quoted in it. Photius[4] is more outspoken, and gives a very damaging analysis of it. Clement taught the eternity of matter; he said the Son was only a creature;[5] he believed in the transmigration of souls (metempsychosis), and in the existence of other worlds, prior to the creation of man. The history of Adam and Eve was

[1] Passage from the seventh book of the *Hypotyposes* of Clement, quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 1.

[2] Eusebius v. 28, § 4. [3] *H. E.* vi. 14. [4] Cod. 109.

[5] On this point, the testimony of Photius is confirmed by Rufinus (Jerome, *Apol. adv. libr. Rufini* ii. 17).

treated in a shamelessly impious manner (*αἰσχρῶς τε καὶ ἀθέως*). According to Clement, the Word was made flesh only in appearance. Moreover, he acknowledged two or three Words, as the following phrase shows: "The Son is also called the Word, with the same name as the Word of the Father; but it was not He who was made flesh; neither was it the Word of the Father; but it was a Power of God, a sort of derivation from His Word, which in the form of reason (*νοῦς γενόμενος*) dwells in the heart of man."

These doctrines, which drew down the condemnation of Photius, scattered as they were in exegetical commentaries, may have been less accentuated than he thinks. The fact remains that these first theological flights of Clement's did not prevent his being enrolled in the college of presbyters of Alexandria. This personal connection between the Church and the School was distinctly of service to the School. The other books of Clement did not give rise to the same objections as the *Hypotyposes*. The chief are the *Miscellanies* (Stromata) and the *Tutor*. In the first, the teaching is chiefly theoretical; the other aims rather at building up the moral character of the disciple. The *Miscellanies* consists of seven books, the first four being written before the *Tutor*. Having completed this last work, Clement returned to the *Miscellanies*, but never finished it.[1]

Clement was extraordinarily learned; he had thoroughly mastered biblical and Christian literature, authentic and apocryphal, and not only orthodox literature, but also Gnostic writings of all kinds. He was not less well read in poetry and heathen philosophy. His quotations—for he quotes freely[2]—have preserved many fragments of lost books.

[1] The eighth book, or that so-called by Eusebius and others after him, is but a collection of quotations from heathen philosophers; it was probably intended to be used, with the "Abridgments of Theodotus," and the "Extracts from the Prophets," in a continuation of the work.

[2] Possibly his quotations are not always first-hand, he may have dipped into anthologies.

But he had not a synthetical mind. He jumps so often from one subject to another, that it is difficult to discover, in his books, any well thought-out plan, or completed design. But, at the beginning of his *Tutor*, he seems to open out on his system of Christian teaching; he distinguishes between the three functions which the Word, through His instrument, fulfils. He convicts (Προτρεπτικός), He trains (Παιδαγωγός, moral education), He teaches (Διδασκαλικός, intellectual education). If the *Miscellanies*, as is probable, correspond to this third process, then, evidently, synthesis was not what Christian Gnosticism, as Clement conceived it, required. The book is full of digressions, and consists of disconnected sentences. This is the more surprising, in that the rival schools of Valentinus and Basilides are remarkable for the synthetical form of their teaching. Origen was needed to supply this element.

Clement did not end his career in Alexandria. The persecution which broke out in Egypt, 202 A.D., was aimed specially at the catechumens; so it necessarily had a disastrous effect on the institution over which he presided. The first two books of his *Miscellanies*, written at that time, contain more than one allusion to this crisis. At last, he had to fly. Shortly afterwards we hear of him at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, with Bishop Alexander, who had studied under him as well as under Pantænus. The persecution also raged furiously in Cæsarea. Alexander was thrown into prison; Clement took his place in the government of the Church, strengthened the faithful, and made many new converts. This is recorded of him, in a letter[1] from Alexander himself, sent by the hand of Clement, to the Church of Antioch, in 211 or 212. He was already well known to the faithful in Antioch. In another letter[2] to Origen, written about 215, Alexander alludes to him as already dead.

Besides his books on theological teaching, Clement

[1] Preserved in part by Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 11. Clement is much praised: διὰ Κλήμεντος τοῦ μακαρίου πρεσβυτέρου, ἀνδρὸς ἐναρέτου καὶ δοκίμου.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14.

wrote others, less speculative, such as his famous discourse "On the salvation of the rich," which we have almost entire, and his homilies "On fasting and on slander." He took part in the controversies of his day on the Paschal question. His book on this subject[1] has some affinity with a similar work by Melito; another, dedicated to his friend Alexander, seems, from its title, *Ecclesiastical Canon against Judaizers*, to have the same tendency.

But what is most open to criticism in Clement's works is not the eccentricity of his theology. The fundamental objection to his teaching, as to that of Origen, and no doubt also to that of their predecessors, is that they attached too much importance to knowledge—religious knowledge, of course. The Gnostic believer—that is to say, the theologian—is to them on a higher spiritual plane than the simple believer. This conception is no doubt quite different from the heretical distinction between psychic and spiritual—depending on natural differences of temperament. Nevertheless, it is also connected with the doctrine of Platonic philosophy, that knowledge, instead of augmenting a man's responsibility, increased his moral worth. The School of Alexandria claimed to turn out Christians who were not only more learned than others, but morally better. This assumption was difficult to reconcile with the general principles of Church discipline. The local Church became aware of this, and, by incorporating the school into itself, gradually modified its tone, both on this and on other points, in which it might otherwise have become a menace to unity.

Of Clement it is uncertain whether he was born at Athens or at Alexandria. Origen,[2] as his name alone

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 26; v. 13.

[2] He derived his name from that of Horus, an Egyptian divinity. For the biography of Origen, see especially Book VI. of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, bearing in mind the historian's apologetic tendency. He had the opportunity of consulting people who had been in touch with Origen; the library of Cæsarea contained all the master's works; as to his letters, it was Eusebius who collected them (vi. 36); they furnished him with many biographical details.

would tell us, was a native of Egypt. His parents were Christians, and of good position: his first master was his own father, Leonides. From his earliest childhood, enthusiasm possessed and consumed him; everything carried him off his feet: learning, martyrdom, asceticism. Leonides was denounced and condemned as a Christian (202-3). His son not being able to share his martyrdom, urged him to confess the faith openly. Deprived by confiscation of his paternal inheritance, he found means to support himself and the large family of which, at the age of seventeen, he became the head. The catechetical School had been dispersed by the persecution; but the example of the marytrs converted many honest folk, who gather round this child, already as distinguished for learning as for faith, and Bishop Demetrius accepted him as a catechist. But the edict of Severus claims new victims in the scarcely reconstituted school. The youthful teacher leads his disciples[1] to martyrdom; others gather around him; nothing daunts his zeal; and at last he draws upon himself the concentrated rage of the heathen fanatics.

More peaceful days succeeded: then, his courage under the fire of persecution was followed by a wild access of asceticism. Origen, by his mortified life, became the forerunner of saints like the Anthonys and the Hilarions. It would not be his fault, if orthodox Christianity were outdone in asceticism by the sternest philosophers, or by these Gnostics and Montanists, who had most cruelly macerated the flesh. Origen went even farther—too far. In the time of Justin,[2] a young Christian of Alexandria, wishing to give the lie to the abominable calumnies which defamed Christian morality, asked permission of the Prefect of Egypt, to apply to himself literally the words of St Matthew, xix. 12. Origen does not ask for leave, he takes it, thinking thus to put a stop to the suspicions

[1] Plutarch, the brother of Heraclas, Serenus, Heraclides, Heron, another Serenus, a woman called Heraïs, Basilides, Potamaena Marcella. Eusebius vi. 4, 5.

[2] Apol. i. 29.

which his duties as catechist might excite amongst the enemies of the Christian name.

Bishop Demetrius, informed of this courageous though unreasonable act of mortification, nevertheless retained Origen at the head of his School. The young teacher soon became the glory of Alexandria. While giving instruction to a daily increasing number of disciples, he never dropped his own studies. Justin, Tatian, and Clement had passed into Christianity from paganism: their education had been first philosophical, and then religious. Origen's studies followed an inverse order. Brought up in the Christian faith, he at first derived from heathen sources only the elements of ordinary knowledge, such as grammar. It was not till much later,[1] when he began to feel he must understand the teaching which he had to oppose, that he set himself to study Greek philosophy and heretical books. He then attended the lectures of Ammonius Saccas, in company with an older disciple, Heraclas, who had already been in the School[2] five years. But, whilst allowing his powerful intellect to range over these fields of learning, he carefully studied Christian tradition, and strove to ascertain exactly what the teaching of the Church was. It seems likely that it was with a view to this, that about 212 he made his journey to Rome, "being desirous," as he says, "to see this very ancient Church."[3] So also he, who, as a student of exegesis, was so bold in his scriptural interpretation, felt more than anyone the need to settle the correct text by critical research. He learnt Hebrew,

[1] Eusebius vi. 19.

[2] Porphyry, in Eusebius vi. 19, § 5, 13. Ammonius Saccas, considered the first master of the Neo-Platonist School, wrote nothing. Porphyry (*loc. cit.*) says that, brought up a Christian, he abandoned his religion and became a pagan. This information is not very reliable, for, in the same place, Porphyry falsely ascribes to Origen an opposite course of development. Eusebius has here confused the philosopher, Ammonius Saccas, with another Ammonius, the author of several books, notably of a treatise "On the Agreement between Moses and Jesus"; perhaps also of a "Harmony of the Gospels," which Eusebius mentions in his letter to Carpianus.

[3] Eusebius vi. 14.

and sought everywhere for different versions, by which to check the Septuagint. His journeys gave him good openings for such research. He is perpetually on the move; to Rome, to Greece, to Nicopolis in Epirus, to Nicomedia, to Antioch, to Palestine, and to Arabia. Heraclas, who had already helped him in his teaching, took charge of the School during the absence of Origen. It was not always thirst for knowledge which sent Origen roaming. Many great personages, anxious for information about Christianity, were moved by his reputation for learning, to send for him. Thus, the legate of Arabia sent an urgent summons for him, and, about 218, the Princess Mammea, mother of the future Emperor, Alexander Severus, sent an escort of cavalry to fetch him from Antioch.

Some time earlier, at the time of the sack of Alexandria by the troops of Caracalla, Origen had been obliged to fly; he took refuge in Palestine, with the Bishops Theoctistus of Cæsarea, and Alexander of Ælia. These prelates, friends of learning, proud to show off to their flock the celebrated catechist of Alexandria, persuaded him to address, not only the catechumens, but all the congregation in their churches. Demetrius vehemently protested against this, which seemed to him to be irregular, and recalled his spiritual son. The Palestinian bishops excused themselves by quoting precedents.[1]

Fifteen years passed. The Bishop of Alexandria, proud of Origen's success, and of the fame of his School, gave him a free hand in his teaching, and did not restrain the bold speculations which are revealed in his earliest works, notably in the *First Principles*[2] now first appearing. A rich and devoted friend of his, named Ambrose, put at his disposal a whole staff of stenographers and copyists: and thus Origen's commentaries attained wide popularity beyond the limits of his School.

[1] Euelpius, authorized to preach by Neon, Bishop of Laranda; Paulinus, by Celsus of Iconium; Theodosius, by Atticus of Synnada. These men are otherwise unknown.

[2] Περὶ ἀρχῶν.

At last, however, a breach with the bishop changed the situation. Origen, summoned to Achaia to combat certain heresies, was ordained priest on his way through Palestine, by his friends the Bishops of Ælia and Cæsarea. Demetrius had refrained from raising him to this office. By leaving Origen a layman, he confined his instruction to the catechumens outside the Church, and prevented his preaching within it. Heraclas had been differently treated, and admitted to the college of presbyters, without renouncing his philosophical studies, or even taking off his philosopher's cloak.[1] Perhaps the Alexandrian usage was already opposed to the ordination of eunuchs.[2] But Eusebius insinuates, and St Jerome declares, that the prelate was only actuated by petty jealousy, and this is quite possible. The Palestinian bishops, whom Demetrius had forbidden to allow Origen to preach because he was not a priest, wished, no doubt, to do away with this restriction. They did not share the views of their colleague of Alexandria as to eunuchs. Neither did they make any difficulty about ordaining a member of another Church.[3] But, however that may be, Demetrius protested roundly, though without giving any other reason than that of the self-inflicted mutilation. Origen, after a tour in Achaia, Asia Minor, and Syria, returned to Egypt, and tried to resume the direction of his School. But this the bishop opposed. Origen was condemned by two successive synods, to give up teaching, to leave Alexandria, and finally, to be deposed from the priesthood. This decision was communicated to the other bishops, and ratified without discussion by many of them. The

[1] Origen, in Eusebius vi. 19.

[2] A hundred years later, the Council of Nicea, where the Bishop of Alexandria was influential, began its canons by an enactment on this point.

[3] From the beginning of the 4th century, it was admitted by all the councils, that no one had the right to admit to Holy Orders clergy from another Church ; afterwards, the laity were included in this prohibition. Origen, in spite of the important service he had rendered to the Alexandrian Church, was only a layman.

decision appears to have been accepted in Rome, as was, later on, a similar sentence pronounced against Arius.[1]

In Palestine, on the contrary, as in Cappadocia and Achaia, Origen's position was strong enough to withstand this blow. He found shelter and protection with the Palestinian bishops, established himself in Cæsarea, and in this new sphere went on teaching in the schools, writing, and preaching to the faithful.

Although he himself was turned out of Alexandria, his doctrine still remained, interpreted by his old co-adjutor, Heraclas. Soon after Origen left, Demetrius died, and was succeeded by Heraclas. It seems that his friendship for Origen had cooled, and that, as a bishop, Heraclas maintained the attitude of his predecessor.[2] The Master remained in Palestine, and one of his disciples, Dionysius, took over the direction of the catechetical School. But in spite of the undoubted efficiency of this new master, the Alexandrian School was no longer in Alexandria. It was in Cæsarea, and thither repaired the most distinguished students such as Gregory, afterwards

[1] Eusebius (vi. 23) refers here to the Second Book of his Apology for Origen, now lost. Photius (cod. 118) has preserved some features of it, and seems to have deduced from it, that Eusebius and Pamphilus did not implicate any but Egyptian bishops, in the condemnation of Origen. St Jerome (Rufinus, *Apol.* i. 20) appears to have heard rumours of a more extensive episcopal condemnation: "Damnatur a Demetrio episcopo; exceptis Palaestinae, et Arabiae, et Phoenices atque Achaiae sacerdotibus in damnationem eius consentit orbis; Roma ipsa contra hunc cogit senatum; non propter dogmatum novitatem nec propter haeresim, ut nunc adversus eum rabidi canes similant, sed quia gloriam eloquentiae eius et scientiae ferre non poterant, et illo dicente omnes muti putabantur."

[2] I say no more, in spite of Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. ii., p. 25 (cf. *Ueberlief*, p. 332) and Bardenhewer, *Gesch.*, vol. ii., p. 80. The passage of Photius, on which they depend, is derived from one of the many malicious legends about Origen. See this passage in Döllinger, *Hippolyt und Kallist*, p. 264; and in Harnack, *Ueberlief*, p. 332 (*cf.* Migne, *P. G.*, vol. civ., p. 1229). Even before it was amended by Döllinger, Tillemont had cleared up the tradition upon this point (*Hist. eccl.*, vol. iii., p. 769).

called Thaumaturgus, and his brother Athenodorus. Thither also came letters to Origen from the most celebrated prelates of the East, such as Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and there also his most important literary enterprises originated; notably, his famous edition of the versions of the Old Testament, the Hexapla and Octapla. People also sought him out there to solve doctrinal difficulties, to refute heretics, and to provide arguments against bishops who had strayed from the accepted teaching. His knowledge, his logic, and his eloquence were invincible. Moreover, to all this was added the charm of the most attractive sanctity, and the prestige of marvellous asceticism. His renown was universal; his writings and his letters circulated throughout the East, and as far as Rome, where, however, they were hardly read, as Greek was passing out of use. And, while thus edifying the Church by his virtue, and illuminating the faith by his teaching, he also defended it against all enemies—heretics, Jews, and pagans, he faced them all. To this last period of his life belongs his famous treatise against Celsus. He still lacked, however, the glory of the martyrs and confessors. In 235, the persecution of Maximinus had obliged him to leave Palestine, and take refuge in Cappadocia. Two of his friends, Ambrose and Protoctetus, a priest of Cæsarea, were thrown into prison. Again taking up the strain with which as a child he had encouraged his father to die for the faith, Origen addressed the two confessors in his "Exhortation to Martyrdom." The tempest passed, but fifteen years later, the Decian persecution found him at his post of Christian Teacher, and he was arrested, dragged to the rack, thrown into prison, and loaded with chains, and his limbs were wrenched asunder. He was threatened with the stake, and subjected to other tortures. Nothing daunted his courage. Nevertheless, less fortunate than his friend Alexander, who died in prison, Origen lived on. He survived the end of the persecution for two or three years, and found time to associate himself with Cornelius, Cyprian, and

Dionysius, the great bishops of the day, in the merciful work of reconciling the apostates, whose faith had failed in the days of trial.[1] His friend, Ambrose, died before him. A letter on martyrdom,[2] from his old disciple, Dionysius, then Bishop of Alexandria, was one of the last that he received. At last he died, crowned with all the honours a Christian may aspire to in this world, and poor to the very last. It was at Tyre that he gave up his beautiful soul to God. His tomb there was long visited.

I do not say venerated. At that time, the solemnities of a yearly commemorative festival were only accorded to martyrs, and to some extent to bishops. Origen does not appear in the legends of the saints: his unremitting labours for the furtherance of learning, great as they were, did not appeal to the ordinary public. And besides, his doctrines were soon called in question; the disputes which raged around his memory were not calculated to crown him with a halo. Some few, indeed, stood up for him, but they were often unskilful and overdid it; and his enemies were many. Few names have been more execrated than his. Yet the historian discerns without difficulty the passions, whether excusable or disgraceful, which stirred up against him such men as Demetrius, Methodius, Epiphanius, Jerome, Theophilus, and Justinian. We are far from possessing all his works, yet we have enough to enable us to estimate and to compare his teaching and the accepted doctrines of the time, and above all, to impress upon us the absolute purity of his intentions.

His literary output is immense. The greater part of it is devoted to the Bible. First came the celebrated Hexapla (or six-fold Bible) where stood in parallel columns the Hebrew text in Hebrew and in Greek characters, and the Septuagint with the Greek texts of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotian, as well as various incomplete versions. This monumental work still existed at Cæsarea in the time of Eusebius; whether it was pre-

[1] Eusebius vi. 39.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi. 46.

served until the time of Epiphanius and Jerome is doubtful. A transcription of part of it, containing only the four Greek versions, was called Tetrapla. Origen also drew up a recension of the Septuagint, in which *obelisks* marked the passages wanting in the Hebrew, and *asterisks* distinguished supplementary passages, borrowed from the version of Theodotian, wherever the Hebrew seemed more complete than the Septuagint. These critical works led up logically, if not chronologically, to an immense mass of commentaries, differing in form (scholia, homilies, treatises, or tracts), but covering all the books of the Old and New Testament.

Besides his labours on the criticism and interpretation of the Bible, Origen left other works on special subjects; treatises *On Prayer* and *On the Resurrection*, an *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, ten books of *Miscellanies*, and the two most famous treatises *Against Celsus*, and *On First Principles*, Περὶ ἀρχῶν. A hundred of his letters, collected by Eusebius, formed an important addition to this literature. Two of them were addressed to the Emperor Philip and to his wife, Otacilia Severa.

Epiphanius estimates the literary productions of Origen at six thousand volumes. This enormous number is not improbable, if we consider the peculiarities of an ancient library, and the small size of the rolls (volumina, τόμοι) written on. However that may be, only a part of his great achievement has been preserved to our day. The copyists, especially the Greeks, were soon turned aside by the anathemas heaped upon him. The Latins, however, were more lenient, and, thanks to them, we still have the treatise on *First Principles*, a profound work from which we can estimate Origen's synthetic theology, though indeed all we have is a rendering, evidently tampered with in several places. Rufinus, the translator, warns us of this in his preface. St Jerome made another and more correct translation ; but of his version, as of the original, unfortunately only fragments remain.

The idea even of a synthesis is characteristic. From the time of St Justin, not to say of St John, men had

sought to employ the conception and language of philosophy as a means of explaining Christian doctrine. But their efforts were incomplete. The points which they intended to defend, or to accentuate, were elaborated in philosophical language; the remainder they left untouched. In this, Justin and the other apologists, and later on, Irenæus, Hippolytus, and Tertullian, are all alike. Their theology, as such, was always incomplete and fragmentary. The doctrinal synthesis was represented by the Creed. There, in that brief formula, between "God, the Father Almighty," and "the resurrection of the body," was comprised all that believers required for faith and hope. Besides this simple popular formula, there were only Gnostic systems, equally complete, from their ineffable abyss to the return to God of elect souls. Clement had philosophized Christianity, but his attention was not drawn to particular points by the necessities of controversy, nor had he ever felt the need of combining the elements of doctrine into an harmonious system. Origen was the first among Christian thinkers to conceive the idea of a synthetic theology, and he also realised it. The following epitome is based on the *First Principles.*

God, in His essential nature is One, immutable and good. By virtue of His goodness, He reveals and communicates Himself; by virtue of His immutability, He reveals and communicates Himself eternally. As, however, it is impossible to conceive of direct relations between essential Oneness and relative manifoldness, God has first[1] to assume a condition capable of such relations. Hence, the Word, a distinct Person, a derived Divinity, Θεός, not ὁ Θεός, and, especially not αὐτόθεος. Origen does not shrink from the term "second God." The Word, begotten of the substance of the Father, is co-eternal and co-substantial with Him. Yet, beside this derivation of being from the Father, the Word, according to Origen, is inferior in that He has, in Himself, the archetype of all finite things, plurality. Thus viewed, He belongs to the

[1] In logical order; chronology is not in question.

category of the created; He is a creature, κτίσμα, as the Bible says.[1]

Here again, as with the apologists, it is the fact of creation which necessitates the existence of the Word. But for Creation, the Word had had no *raison d'être*. However—and here Origen is quite logical—the essential goodness of God requires the existence of creatures; therefore, the Word is necessary and eternal.

Neither in this system, nor, once more, in that of the apologists, does there appear any place for a third Divine Person. The theory propounded requires no Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, Origen, like all his orthodox predecessors, acknowledged Him. He occupies so prominent a place in the doctrine of the Church,[2] that it is impossible to get out of doing so. And thus, the Holy Spirit completes the Trinity, or rather the hierarchy of Divine Persons. The characteristic relations of the three Persons of this hierarchy towards created life are—that the Father acts (indirectly) upon all beings; the Word, upon reasonable beings, or souls; and the Holy Spirit, upon beings who are both reasonable and sanctified.

Such is the Divine World, as constituted by the Three immutable Persons; below, comes the world of inferior spirits subject to change. They were created free, and almost immediately so abused their liberty,[3] that restraint and correction became necessary. To this end, the world of sense was created. The body is a provision for the purifying discipline of the spirit. In proportion to the

[1] Proverbs viii. 22, according to the Greek version: Κύριος ἔκτισέ με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ. St Jerome translates it *Dominus possedit me* elsewhere (Gen. xiv.), where the present participle (qônê) of the same verb (qânô) occurs twice. He translates it the first time (v. 14) by *qui creavit*, and the second time (v. 22) by *possessor*.

[2] Nevertheless, tradition does not seem to him to decide whether the Holy Spirit was begotten or not (γενητὸς ἢ ἀγένητος), nor whether He was, or was not, the Son of God (i. 1), see above, p. 170.

[3] This conception of original sin, as originating outside the world of sense, differs considerably from that of the Church. It is more like the Valentinian theory. Yet, according to Valentinus, original sin was attributable to a divine being; that is not the case here.

gravity of their fault, the bodies which spirits are endowed with are either etherial (angels) or material (men), or grotesque and horrible (demons).

Thus the creation of the body is correlative to that of spirit; there is no such thing as uncreated matter.

The union of body and soul gives the latter the opportunity for struggle and victory. In this struggle, men retain their free-will and are helped by angels and hindered by demons. But the conflict will have an end;[1] evil is not eternal; and the purification will include even the demons.

Here the theory of Redemption comes in. The Word, deeply concerned in the probation of men, sent them the assistance of chosen souls in a bodily form; the Prophets. He even used a whole nation as an instrument of deliverance; but finally, all intermediaries proving insufficient, He came Himself. An absolutely pure soul[2] took human form; and the Word united Himself to this soul, which retained its liberty, and remained capable of right or wrong action. Hence the development of the Man Christ. With Origen the salvation of the ordinary Christian arises from the work of the cross, the sacrifice, payment of the debt, emancipation from bondage to the demon; for the Gnostic Christian, salvation comes from intellectual enlightenment. To neither of them is it the Word made flesh raising, by the closest communion, human nature to the divine. The Christ of Origen removes obstacles from the path of the ordinary Christian, and offers to the Gnostic Christian an example and illumination; but that is all.

The end of things is only a relative end, for things must always exist, and the circle recommence. When life is ended, the sin which still remains is expiated in another way, by an immaterial and purifying fire. Then, the created spirit enters its final state. Clothed with a glorified body, which has nothing in common with the human body, it is henceforth confirmed in goodness. The

[1] A relative end, of course, and which only concerns individuals; for the movement of things is in endless cycles.

[2] An exception to universal sin.

material body left behind serves to clothe other spirits in endless succession.

Such is Origen's system. At the beginning of his *First Principles*, he describes the method of its formation. Origen begins by drawing up a list of the points clearly held by the Church; he carefully distinguishes between what he finds in authorized preaching, and what is only private opinion or vague belief. Authorized teaching is far from giving the key to all problems; nevertheless, he intends his synthesis to rest on that. "Here are the elements, the foundations, which must be used if, according to the precept, 'Enlighten yourself with the lamp of knowledge,' a doctrinal compendium is to be drawn up, rationally designed as an organic whole. Make use of clear and indisputable inference; draw from Holy Scripture, whatever can be found there, or deduced from it; and then, from all these various sources, form one single body of doctrine."

It is impossible to imagine a more excellent method. Unfortunately, it is taken for granted that Holy Scripture may be interpreted allegorically. And so any doctrine may be discovered in any given text; and thus the door is opened to private judgment, to rash speculation, and to all the vagaries of an ever-changing philosophy. Thus, Origen ended by constructing a system, which is scarcely recognizable as Christianity; a sort of compromise between the Gospel and Gnosticism, a theological system, in which the traditional teaching is rather evaded than incorporated, and where even what seems satisfactory in itself becomes alarming when its context is taken into account.

After the death of Origen, his doctrine provoked much criticism, but more on special points than as a whole, for no one appears to have attacked the system, as such. And this criticism, even, was long delayed. The *First Principles* was not by any means the last work of its author. He wrote it at Alexandria, before he got into trouble with Bishop Demetrius. Demetrius was not alarmed by it; indeed, he cannot have been hard to please in the matter of doctrine, for it was in his time

that Clement published his *Hypotyposes*. When he finally broke with Origen, and denounced him to the whole Church, it was only on account of his self-mutilation and of his ordination by the foreign bishops. Heraclas, the friend of Origen, and his fellow-worker, when he published the *First Principles*, made no protest, either then, or as Bishop of Alexandria. Dionysius, who ruled the Alexandrian Church, after Heraclas, was himself a disciple of Origen, and kept on good terms with him to the end. We know in what veneration he was held by the Bishops of Palestine, of Arabia, of Phœnicia, of Cappadocia, and of Achaia. In Rome, the judgment of Bishop Demetrius, which, as we have seen, had no doctrinal significance, was accepted, and for a time the matter went no further. In the end, however, disquieting rumours arose and reached Pope Fabian. Origen thought it necessary to write to him, as well as to other bishops, on his orthodoxy. He complained bitterly of people who had falsified his writings, and even of the indiscretion of Ambrose,[1] who, in his haste to publish his friend's works, had allowed him no time for revision.[2] Only an optimist would accept such an explanation with his eyes shut. Still, it is certain, not only that Origen died in the communion of the Church, but that his doctrine, whatever surprise it may here and there have occasioned, was never officially condemned during his lifetime.

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 36. *Cf.* Jerome, ep. lxxxiv. 10, and Rufinus, *in Hier.* i. 44. This is what St Jerome says: "Ipse Origenes in epistola quam scribit ad Fabianum Romanae urbis episcopum poenitentiam agit cur talia scripserit et causas temeritatis in Ambrosium refert quod secreto edita in publicum protulerit." If Jerome had heard any rumour of a condemnation of Origen's doctrine pronounced in Rome during his lifetime, we may be quite sure that he would have turned it to account in his quarrel with Rufinus.

[2] See the preceding note; see also the letter of Origen to his friends in Alexandria, in Rufinus, *De adulter, librorum Origenis*, Migne, *P. G.*, vol. xvii., p. 624.

CHAPTER XIX

CHURCH AND STATE IN THE THIRD CENTURY

Persecution by special edict. Septimius Severus forbids conversions. Religious syncretism: Julia Domna, Elagabalus, Alexander Severus. Maximin's Edict against the clergy. Persecutions of Decius, Gallus, and Valerian. Ecclesiastical property.

In the history of Christianity, the last years of Marcus Aurelius are marked with blood. Persecution, like much else, had grown slack during the reign of Commodus; not that the prohibition of Christianity was withdrawn, but as in Rome the central government refrained from enforcing it, and was even somewhat tolerant, it was open to the provincial authorities to be strict or easy-going, according to circumstances and inclination. In Asia, the pro-consul Arrius Antoninus (184-5) distinguished himself by his zeal against the Christians. Once, during his proceedings against them, the whole body of Christians in the town appeared before him and gave themselves up to his tribunal. Some he sent to execution; and to the rest he said, "Miserable wretches! if you so desire death, you have precipices, or halters, at command." A characteristic incident which reveals the embarrassing results of the attempt to apply the law in its full rigour.

In Rome, in spite of the affair of Apollonius, things were fairly quiet. It was the same in Africa, where about this date Tertullian refers to the humanity of some of the pro-consuls.[1]

[1] *Ad Scap.* 4. "Cincius Severus, qui Thysdri ipse dedit remedium quomodo responderent Christiani ut dimitti possent; Vespronius Candidus, qui Christianum quasi tumultuosum civibus suis satisfacere dimisit."

This uncertainty in the application of the law, which restricted severity to isolated cases, was hardly likely to impede the progress of Christianity seriously. The danger to the State, which impressed Celsus so deeply, finally roused the emperors to take more effective measures. We have already inquired into the origin of the prohibition which, during the 2nd century, formed the only legal ground for persecution. Now, though this general prohibition was not revoked, new edicts were issued, specifying the different classes of Christians to be prosecuted, and determining the whole procedure, including police regulations, penalties, and confiscations. The application of these edicts was not left to the discretion of individual governors; they were bound to take action, and to follow out from point to point, the plan of repression laid down by the officials of the Imperial Secretariat. Consequently, the persecutions became far more fierce; though, on the other hand, of shorter duration. Before long, however, the constant change of emperors, and some instances of the failure of severe measures, led to the withdrawal of the persecuting edicts.

1. *The Time of the Severian Emperors*

Septimius Severus was the first emperor to issue such an edict. Personally, he was far from unfavourable to the Christians. His house was full of them, and his son Caracalla was brought up by a Christian nurse.[1] But this did not mitigate the severity of provincial governors. Tertullian's Apology, his two books, *Ad Nationes*, in 195, and his appeal to the pro-consul Scapula in 211, were written to protest against the cruelty of the magistrates of Severus. But these documents do not bear on the particular form of persecution, with which the name of this emperor is specially connected. What Severus tried to do was to stop the conversions to Christianity. He issued an edict with that object, about 200 A.D., during his visit to Syria. Spartian records it, in clear but laconic terms: "He forbade, under grave penalties, conversions to Judaism

[1] Tert., *ad Scap.* 4.

or Christianity."[1] The circumcision of anyone, not a Jew by birth, had long been strictly forbidden. This prohibition was now extended to baptism; though, apparently, not for long. At any rate, Christian writers do not distinguish between the victims of this edict and those of ordinary persecution. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that at this very time the catechetical School of Alexandria was dispersed, and Clement, its head, obliged to leave Egypt. This school was the most prominent organ of Christian propaganda in Egypt: masters and disciples both came clearly under the operation of the edict. Origen, who tried to reconstitute the School, was also proscribed, and though he himself escaped death, many of his newly converted disciples were arrested and executed. This was in the year 202, when the celebrated martyrs, Perpetua, Felicitas, Saturus, and their companions, all neophytes or catechumens, perished at Carthage.

While the Emperor Severus[2] was thus enforcing the old Roman methods, his own house became the centre of an intellectual movement, whence sprang a sort of religious rival to Christianity. Before his elevation to the throne, Severus had found a wife in an old Syrian priestly family, attached to the service of the temple of El-Gabal, at Emesa. Julia Domna, the daughter of the high-priest Bassianus, was a woman of strong will, and of remarkable intelligence and cultivation. As empress, she was soon surrounded by all that was most intellectual in the empire. At that time, cultivated men had ceased to ridicule the gods. They were becoming religious. Philosophical mysticism had not, as yet, expressed itself in the formulas of the neo-Platonic system; but there was, almost everywhere, a tendency to transform the Pantheon into a hierarchy, so as to reconcile it in some degree with a conception of Divine Unity; in morality, this school

[1] *Judaeos fieri sub gravi poena vetuit; idem etiam de christianis sanxit.* Spartian, Severus 17 (vol. i., p. 137, Peter).

[2] For the intellectual position of that day, in matters of philosophy and religion, see Jean Réville, *La religion à Rome sous les Sévères*, 1886, p. 190 *et seq.*

encouraged Pythagorean asceticism. In short, it was feeling its way; and Julia Domna helped to find it. A woman of such practical ability, that if allowed, she would have ruled the State, could not ignore the religious position, and she interested her circle in it also. In spite of edicts old and new, the progress of Christianity was becoming daily more alarming. The old religions could only bring against it a divided force. Might they not be drawn together round some tenet or symbol, and thus acquire a kind of unity? Might not the gods of divers temples and people be regarded as the representatives of a Supreme God, the Creator of the world, who ruled it through them, and of whom they were only partial manifestations? The most natural, and at the same time the most splendid symbol of this Supreme God, would be the sun, which sheds light and heat over all. The beautiful empress, brought up at the altars of a Semitic god, conversant with all the mythologies and philosophies of Greece, and surrounded, on the Palatine, by an areopagus of thinkers from the four corners of the empire, was herself the personification of this new movement—the ideal high priestess of this synthetic system.

She had, however, too much good sense to pose as being herself inspired. She left that rôle to a rather mysterious personage, Apollonius of Tyana, who was known to have lived in the time of the Cæsars and the Flavians. His reputation as Pythagorean ascetic, miracle-worker, wandering preacher, and sorcerer, still lingered in Asia Minor and elsewhere. One of the empress's literary circle, Philostratus, was set to write his life. Julia Domna had in her possession some rather doubtful memoirs by a certain Damius, said to have been a companion of Apollonius. These she gave to Philostratus, and on this foundation he embroidered extensively, borrowing right and left, even from the Christian Gospels, the traits best calculated to bring out the importance and virtues of his hero: such as, his love for his fellow-creatures, his great compassion for human misery, and his deep religious

devotion to the gods in general, and the divine Sun in particular.

The book had a great success, much more so than the new religion. In surroundings hostile to Christianity, it was soon seen what capital could be made of it, if not in favour of pagan syncretism, at least against the spread of Christianity. Once accepted as true, the legend of Apollonius would rival the Gospel in the story of a beautiful life, pure, pious, and devoted, abounding in miracles and acts of beneficence. Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian did not fail to make the most of it.

The influence of Julia Domna continued after the death of Severus in 211, till the end of the reign of Caracalla. When her son was assassinated (217), the empress preferred death to submission to his murderers. Her equally ambitious sister, Julia Mœsa, then appeared on the scene, and unexpectedly prolonged the Severian dynasty, and the influence of the high priestly family of Emesa. She had two daughters, Sohemias and Mammea, each the mother of a young son. The soldiers of the army of the East, much attached to Caracalla, were persuaded to believe that the son of Sohemias was the natural son of their emperor. The child—he was but thirteen—was already high-priest of Emesa. Macrinus, who had succeeded Caracalla, was deposed, and the young priest became Roman Emperor. We know him by the name of the god Elagabalus, whom he transported to Rome, and continued to worship with fanatical devotion. Like his great-aunt Domna, the new emperor was a syncretist, but after a fashion of his own. Olympus must centre round his god, and his first step was to marry that deity to the celestial Juno of Carthage. Baal, having emigrated to the West, was reunited to Astoreth, and greeted with the accustomed Syrian rites, in all their depravity and frenzy. The emperor himself presided over this religious orgy, and there delighted to abase all that remained of the old Roman dignity. At last the pretorians sickened of the imperial high-priest and his obscene processions. They threw him into the Tiber, and replaced

him by the son of Mammea, the gentle and virtuous Alexander. The god of Emesa, the goddess of Carthage, and many other divinities, brought from afar for the celestial nuptials, were sent back to their temples. Alexander, however, had also a turn for eclecticism in religion. His piety was even more inclusive than that of Julia Domna, and he venerated at the same time, in his oratory, Abraham and Orpheus, Jesus Christ and Apollonius of Tyana. Mammea, his mother, had had communications with Origen and Hippolytus,[1] and possibly Alexander may also have had some acquaintance with them. He would have raised a temple to Jesus Christ, and included Him, officially, amongst the gods, but for the intervention of his advisers. They did not, however, prevent his openly tolerating Christian communities, extolling their morality and organization, and, on occasion, protecting them against unjust accusations.[2]

Peace reigned for thirteen years, then Alexander was assassinated by some mutinous soldiers (March 19, 235), who flung the imperial purple over the shoulders of Maximin, a rough and fanatical soldier. A violent reaction at once set in. The Christians, favoured by the late emperor, were now singled out for persecution by a special edict, which, Eusebius tells us, was aimed solely at the leaders. Origen says also that the Christian buildings were burned.[3] It was then that his friends, Ambrose the deacon,[4] and Protoctetus, the priest of Cæsarea in Palestine, to whom he addressed his "Exhortation to Martyrdom" were arrested, and that he himself was obliged to hide. All three, however, survived this persecution. It was specially fierce in Cappadocia, where the legate did not content himself with hunting out the clergy, but attacked all believers indiscriminately.[5] In Rome, Bishop Pontian, and Hippolytus, the head of a schismatic community, were

[1] See above, pp. 231 and 250.
[2] Lampridius, *Alexander*, 22, 29, 43, 45, 49, 51.
[3] Eusebius vi. 28; Origen, *In Matth.* 28.
[4] St Jerome, *De viris*, 56.
[5] Firmilian, *ap. Cypr.*, ep. lxxv. 10.

arrested and exiled to Sardinia, where they speedily died.[1] The Bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Cæsarea of Cappadocia, must have eluded the pursuit, for no vacancies are chronicled in these sees, under Maximin. The Bishop of Carthage must have escaped also, for we hear of no martyr among the predecessors of St Cyprian. On the whole, the edicts of Maximin do not appear to have been rigidly carried out during his lifetime; after his death they were not enforced at all. Gordian III. (238-43 A.D.) and Philip (243-49) left the Christians in peace. By reputation,[2] at least, Philip was a Christian, but secretly; his coinage and the records of his doings give no indication of any external difference in religion between him and the other emperors.

2. *The Decian Persecution* (250-51)

Decius being proclaimed emperor in September 249, found himself almost immediately confronted by a double task: he had to effect a moral reform, and to repel the invasion of the Goths. This latter duty was forced upon him by circumstances, and though he did not succeed, he at least died with honour in the attempt.

The work of reform he took upon himself, without duly estimating either his own strength, or the obstacles to be overcome. He revived the office of censor, and entrusted it to the senator Valerian, commissioning him to reform all abuses, whether in the palace, the senate, the government, or elsewhere. A determination to extirpate the Christian religion was among his schemes for general reform; he saw in Christianity a potent solvent of Roman manners and customs; he expected to put an end to it by severe measures, vigorously applied. It was rather late in the day, however, to embark on such an undertaking.[3]

The edict of persecution, to judge by the way it was

[1] *Cat. lib.*

[2] Dionysius of Alexandria, in Eusebius vii. 10.

[3] For this persecution, see (1st) Cyprian, *Ep.* 1-56; *De lapsis;* (2nd) Dionysius of Alexandria, letters to Fabius of Antioch (Eusebius vi. 41, 42) to Domitius and Didymus (Eusebius vii. 11, 20), to Germanus

applied—for the text has not been preserved—ordered all Christians, and all suspected of Christian tendencies, to make some act of adhesion to paganism, to make a sacrifice, or libation, or to participate in the sacred feasts. In every town, even in every village, a commission was appointed to preside over the business. A certificate of sacrifice was given to those who submitted.[1] Those who stood firm were to have pressure brought to bear on them by the government officials and municipal authorities. Naturally, those first sought out were the bishops and clergy, and other notable Christians. The confessors were cast into prison, and there suffered hunger and thirst, and other lingering tortures, until they apostatized. From time to time, capital sentences and executions showed the length to which the authorities were prepared to go. The stake was often resorted to, because the entire destruction of the body was supposed to do away with all hope of resurrection. The property of fugitives was confiscated.

These measures, vigorously applied, seemed at first to be completely successful. In the face of persecution the majority of Christians made a deplorably poor stand. "The apostasy was universal," says Dionysius of Alexandria; "many important persons came forward of their own accord; the leaders allowed themselves to be brought

(Eusebius vi. 40). Among the *passiones martyrum* which belong to the Decian persecution, the passion of Pionius is the only one which can be quoted with confidence (the Greek text is to be found in Gebhardt, *Acta martyrum selecta*, p. 96); that of Carpus (see above, p. 193, note 1) may perhaps belong also to this time. As to the martyrdom of SS. Achatius (Antioch of Pisidia), Maximus, and SS. Peter, Andrew, Paul, Dionysia (Lampsacus), Conon (Magydos), Nestor (Side), Tryphonus and Respicius (Nicæa), Lucian and Marcion (Bithynia), and Saturninus (Toulouse), the accounts are too late to be utilized.

[1] Some of these certificates are found in the original in Egyptian papyri. Three were discovered near Arsinoë; a fourth comes from Oxyrhynchus (Archives of the Academy of Berlin, 1893, p. 1007, of the Academy of Vienna, 1894, p. 3; Atti del ii. Congresso di archeol. crist. Rome, 1902, p. 398; Grenfell and Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus papyri*, vol. iv., London, 1904). *Cf.* Harnack, *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, 1894, p. 38, 162, Franchi, *Nuovo Bull. di archeol.* crist., 1895, p. 68, and *Miscellanea di st. e cult. eccl.*, 1904, p. 3.

by those beneath them, or by their colleagues. Summoned by name, and invited to sacrifice, they most of them advanced, pale and trembling, as though they had come, not to offer sacrifice, but to be sacrificed themselves. The crowd, gathered for the spectacle, laughed them to scorn; all saw they were cowards, as much afraid to sacrifice as to die. Others, with more effrontery, rushed to the altars, protesting that they had never been Christians. It is of such as these that the Lord said they could scarcely be saved. As to the lower classes, they either followed the rest, or took to flight. A certain number were arrested. Of these, some persevered so far as to endure chains and imprisonment, even for a considerable time; but, before being brought before the tribunal, they abjured. Others were only overcome by torture."

In Carthage and in Rome, things went as in Alexandria. In Smyrna, the Bishop Eudœmon apostatized, with many of his flock. But, on the other hand, there were some martyrs and more confessors. In Rome, Pope Fabian, arrested at the beginning of the persecution, was put to death on January 20, 250. Two priests, Moyses and Maximus, and two deacons, Rufinus and Nicostratus, were thrown into prison, where they remained over a year. Moyses died towards the end of the year. At Toulouse, Bishop Saturninus was executed. Pionius, a priest of Smyrna, was surprised when celebrating the anniversary of St Polycarp with a faithful few, and died at the stake. A Marcionite priest, called Metrodorus, suffered with him. Pionius not only died in company with a Marcionist, but was imprisoned with Eutychianus, a Montanist; the edict knew no distinction between the main Church and the sects. In Antioch and Jerusalem, the Bishops Babylas and Alexander were arrested, and died in prison. Origen, who was imprisoned, and all but torn in two on the rack, escaped with his life; but worn out, no doubt by the sufferings he had undergone, he did not live long.

In many places the bishops made good their escape; St Cyprian at Carthage and St Gregory at Neo-Cæsarea did so, and so did also, no doubt, the bishops of Cæsarea

in Cappadocia and other places of which no account exists. Dionysius of Alexandria, being arrested as he was leaving the town, was rescued from his escort by friendly peasants, who led him to a place of safety.

From their hiding-places, the bishops still continued to direct their churches; they kept up communication with those of their clergy who remained at their posts under the fire of persecution, and with those courageous believers who still carried on the work of Christian charity. On this point, St Cyprian's letters are very interesting. They show how Christian communities in Rome and Carthage managed to exist under the reign of terror.

In Rome, the situation was so serious, that it was impossible to elect a successor to Pope Fabian. The See remained vacant for fifteen months.

A year of anguish passed. The confessors, crammed into dungeons, died slowly. From time to time, some of them were bound to the stake, thrown to the beasts, or beheaded. The Church joyfully recorded these noble names. Martyrs were buried, prisoners were visited, fugitives were succoured, the courage of those in danger was upheld, and already there was work to be done in the consolation and reconciliation of penitent apostates.

Towards the end of 250 A.D., the persecution slackened; and in the following spring, it ceased. The bishops reappeared; Christian gatherings were resumed. In November, 251, Decius died in battle on the Danube. The danger seemed to be over. St Cyprian called together a Council at Carthage, and the Church of Rome appointed a bishop.

But this tranquillity did not last. Trebonianus Gallus, the successor of Decius, issued a new edict to compel the Christians to sacrifice. The empire was then devastated by plague. This seems to have caused the second persecution, to which we have but a few allusions, in the letters of St Cyprian and St Dionysius of Alexandria.[1]

The new Pope, Cornelius, was arrested; but his flock

[1] Cyprian, Ep. lix. 6; Dionysius' letter to Hermammon (Eusebius vii. 1). Cyprian wrote his treatise *ad Demetrianum* at this time.

crowded to the tribunal, proclaiming their faith and their readiness to die for it.[1] Cornelius was merely incarcerated at Centumcellae (Civita Vecchia), where he died some months later (June, 253). Lucius, elected in his place, was exiled very soon after his consecration. He was recalled before long either by Gallus himself, or by Æmilian, his short-lived successor, and he took up the government of the Church again early in 254, but died a few weeks later (March 4). Æmilian had already been deposed by Valerian, who restored peace to the Church, and at first showed himself favourably inclined toward the Christians.

It was now possible to estimate the results of the persecution. Gallus had revived it, to pander to the populace, which was perturbed by calamities of all sorts—pestilence, famine, and the invasion of the barbarians. The sanguinary edicts of Decius, however, were originally due to reasons of state. Decius, and his "reasons of state," however, had the worst of it. No doubt, for some time, the life of Christianity seemed suspended. Optimist officials must have written triumphant reports. An immense number of apostasies had been inscribed upon the registers. The majority of recognised Christians had the certificate of sacrifice. The more obstinate would, no doubt, after a taste of prison discipline, end by complying with the regulations. But multitudes were forgotten, who had either concealed their Christianity, or baffled the police. If so many bishops, priests, and deacons succeeded in hiding, and even in continuing their ministrations at the most critical moments, it must have been because the authorities either could not or would not see all that was going on. When the persecution ended, there still remained a great many Christians, who, never having been called upon to sacrifice, were neither apostates nor confessors. The success of this edict, which seemed so complete, was in reality but very partial.

Moreover, though the apostates had sacrificed or received the certificate of sacrifice, yet they had not, for all that, gone over to the religion of the empire, or given up

[1] Cyprian, *op. cit.*

Christianity. They were reconciled with the State, but not with their own consciences. Long before peace was restored, they began to come to their priests and bishops, with tears of repentance, craving pardon and readmission to the congregation. The emperor had made many cowards, but he had not diminished the number of Christians. Persecution even reanimated their spirits, for under Gallus the Roman Christians associated themselves in a body with the confession of their bishop; they had not done as much for Fabian at the outset of the persecution. Even the clamour of the heathen populace, if now and again it uprose against the Christians, was dying down; the old calumnies were disappearing, for the increase of Christianity drew together and mingled the pagan and Christian communities, and led to a better understanding. Only in times of public calamity was the cry of the mob now heard: Christians to the lions! The scenes of martyrdom which uplifted enthusiastic believers and troubled the conscience of apostates, drew protests occasionally even from pagan spectators.[1] In short, after the 3rd century, those emperors who left the Christians in peace, and not those who persecuted them, seem to have been in closest accord with the popular feeling.

3. *Valerian's Persecution*

Dionysius of Alexandria has left a vivid picture of the peace enjoyed by the Church during the first years (254-57) of Valerian's reign. The tranquillity had not been deeper, or the Christians better treated, even during the reign of their co-religionist Philip. So many Christians surrounded the emperor, that his household formed, as it were, a "Church of God." Dionysius attributes the sudden change in the attitude of Valerian to the influence of one of the ministers, Macrian, whom he speaks of under a figure as the chief of the magicians of Egypt. Macrian appears indeed to have been a fanatical pagan addicted to the practice of magic, and, as such, a bitter foe of the Christians.

[1] "Cruel sentence—unjust condemnation," the pagans muttered, at the sight of the sufferings of St Carpus and his companions.

The empire had not recovered from its misfortunes. The frontiers were assailed on all sides; the Franks, the Alamans, and other pillaging tribes from Germany crossed the Rhine and the Danube. The Goths, dwellers by the North Sea, became pirates, harried the sea-board, ravaged Asia Minor, and even showed themselves in the Ægean. On the east of the empire, the Persians took possession of Armenia and Mesopotamia. Even the tribes of the Sahara attacked the outposts of Numidia. Valerian, good but weak, so far lost his head as to yield to fanatical counsels and renew Decian's futile persecution of the Christians.

It was again a war of extermination,[1] intended not simply to stop the progress of the Church, but to destroy it. At first it was hoped that comparatively mild and bloodless methods would suffice. Then these having failed, they again had recourse to executions. There are, therefore, two edicts, of which most of the provisions are known. The first was published in August, 257; the second a year later. The first edict[2] only affected the higher clergy—bishops,

[1] For the persecution of Valerian, see (1st) Dionysius of Alexandria, letters to Hermammon (Eusebius vii. 10) and to Germanus (vii. 11). In this last letter, he reproduces the account of his trial before the Prefect of Egypt in 257. (Note that the letter to Domitian and Didymus, which Eusebius gives later, relates to the Decian persecution, and not to that of Valerian); (2nd) Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxvi.-lxxix.; (3rd) Passion of St Cyprian; (4th) The Life of St Cyprian, by his deacon Pontius; (5th) The Passions of St Fructuosus, Bishop of Tarragona, and his companions, Marien and James, of SS. Montanus, Lucius, etc.; (6th) Eusebius vii. 12.

[2] Account of the appearance of St Cyprian before the proconsul of Africa, Aspasius Paternus, on August 30, 257. The proconsul said to the Bishop—"Qui Romanam religionem non colunt debere Romanas caeremonias recognoscere. . . . Non solum de episcopis verum etiam de presbyteris mihi scribere dignati sunt (Valerianus and Gallienus impp.). . . . Praeceperunt etiam ne in aliquibus locis conciliabula fiant nec cœmeteria ingrediantur. Si quis itaque hoc tam salubre praeceptum non observaverit, capite plectetur. In the account of the trial of St Dionysius of Alexandria, the Prefect of Egypt enumerates the same conditions, almost in the same terms. See especially as to the Christian meetings: Οὐδαμῶς δὲ ἔξεσται ὑμῖν οὔτε ἄλλοις τισὶν ἢ συνόδους ποιεῖσθαι ἢ εἰς τὰ καλούμενα κοιμητήρια εἰσιέναι. It follows from this last document that the edict applied to deacons.

priests, and deacons. They were enjoined to sacrifice to the gods of the empire, but were not forbidden to worship their own God, if they did so privately and without assembling for that purpose. Thus the principle of religious syncretism was extended to Christianity, and imposed by public authority. On recalcitrants, the magistrate was to pronounce a sentence of exile.

Authentic documents relate what happened in Alexandria and Carthage. The two bishops, summoned before the governor, were put through the same interrogatory, and on their refusal to recognise the Roman religion, were confined within given districts. Cyprian appeared alone; Dionysius, in company with a priest, three deacons, and a certain Marcellus from Rome, no doubt a Roman priest or deacon. In Numidia, the imperial legate was more severe, and condemned many bishops, priests, and deacons to the mines; other Christians were associated with them.[1] Perhaps they had infringed the edict by holding meetings.

The second edict was promulgated a year later, in the East, where the emperor was fighting the Persians, and was addressed by him to the Senate, with instructions for provincial governors. The last but one of St Cyprian's letters,[2] gives an analysis of it. It included not only the clergy, but laymen in certain positions. Bishops, priests, and deacons were to be incontinently punished with death; senators and knights were to forfeit their dignities, and to be deprived of their goods; and, if they still persisted, they were to suffer capital punishment. Matrons were to be deprived of their goods, and exiled. The Cæsarians, that is, those employed on the imperial estates —an immense body, spreading throughout the empire— were to suffer confiscation, and to be despatched in chains to servile work in mines, farms, and so on.

[1] Cyprian, Ep. lxxvi.-lxxix. These confessors were scattered in groups throughout the *metallum* of Sigus, a few miles to the south-east of Cirta, in Numidia. The bishops had all taken part in the Council of Carthage in 256.

[2] Ep. lxxx.

Messengers from Rome carried the substance of the edict to St Cyprian. When they left the capital, Pope Xystus II. and four of the deacons of Rome had already suffered martyrdom in the cemetery (August 6). Two others, Felicissimus and Agapetus, soon shared their fate, and finally, the last survivor of the college of deacons, St Lawrence, was burnt to death on August 10. At Carthage, Cyprian was summoned before the pro-consul for the second time, and on his refusal to sacrifice, executed with the sword. In Spain, the following year the Bishop of Tarragona, Fructuosus, was burnt alive with his two deacons, Eulogius and Augurius. The accounts of the martyrdom of SS. James and Marien, in Numidia, and of Montanus, Lucius, and others in the pro-consulate, show us that the persecution was still raging in the African provinces in 259. The martyrdom of the clergy was shared by many ordinary insignificant believers in consequence, no doubt, of the edict which condemned to death those who attended religious meetings.

We have no documentary evidence as to the eastern provinces. Dionysius was brought back from exile to the neighbourhood of Alexandria, but, though he had much to suffer, he was not executed. The clergy of Cæsarea in Palestine also escaped. Eusebius[1] can only tell us of three peasants, Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander, who were thrown to the beasts, in company with a woman of the Marcionite sect. These martyrs had, however, given themselves up.

In Syria and Asia Minor a lull in the persecution may have been caused by the invasion of the Persians. But the absence of direct documentary evidence is no proof that there was no persecution. Valerian gone, Macrian must have continued the severities he had instituted. Not so Gallienus, for though his name appears, with that

[1] For the martyrs of Massa Candida, near Utica, see a treatise by Pio Franchi de' Cavalieri, in the *Studi e Testi* of the Vatican Library, fasc. 9, p. 39 *et seq.* And there is in the same collection an important treatise on the martyrdom of Montanus and Marien by the same author, fasc. 3.

[2] *H. E.* vii. 12.

of his father, at the head of edicts against the Christians, yet he soon showed himself favourably disposed towards them. Proscriptions ceased. The bishops restored to their sees, even ventured to approach the emperor, and ask for the restoration of their confiscated churches and cemeteries. Gallienus gave the requisite orders. Two imperial letters, relating to this restitution, passed through Eusebius' hands, and in his *Ecclesiastical History* he inserted a translation of one addressed to Dionysius of Alexandria, Pinnas, Demetrius, and other bishops.[1]

The reign of Gallienus inaugurated a long period of religious peace. Direct active persecution did not revive till 300 A.D., during the last years of Diocletian. Aurelian, towards the end of his reign, had indeed intended to recommence it, and even made arrangements for the purpose. But his death, in 275, stopped the execution of the new edicts before they reached the provinces at a distance from his headquarters.[2]

4. *Corporate Property of the Christian Church*

From the moment that Rome made an official distinction between Jews and Christians, the Christians were obliged to conceal, not only their individual belief, but also their corporate existence. The Christian communities, not being recognised by the State, fell under the ban of the very strict laws, which forbade unauthorised associations. Pliny, who inquired of Trajan how to treat persons convicted of Christianity, required no special instructions how to stop their assemblies.[3] Trajan, believing all associations to be dangerous, preferred to expose the towns to the risk of conflagration, rather than to allow

[1] *H. E.* vii. 13.

[2] He was then in Thrace, near Byzantium. These edicts are mentioned by Eusebius (vii. 30) and by Lactantius, *De mortibus pers.* 6. No martyrdom we know of can be connected with them.

[3] He imagined he had succeeded: "Quod ipsum (the assemblies) facere desisse (adfirmabant) post edictum meum quo secundum mandata tua hetaerias esse vetueram (Ep. x. 96).

them to organise fire brigades. Under such conditions the churches must have needed many ruses to hide their social life from the authorities. Nevertheless, from the beginning, they had pecuniary resources and common funds.

A century after Trajan, we hear of landed property, churches, and cemeteries. These must have been held in the name of some individual; but that gave little guarantee of security. Any change in the attitude of the proprietor or his heirs, such as his becoming an apostate, or a heretic, would emperil the tenure of the Church. If a burial-place were in question, its purpose, of course, could not be altered; but, for instance, an ill-disposed heir might bury heretic or pagan relations[1] in a Christian cemetery. It was therefore expedient to find some other mode of holding property.

And in this they succeeded. In the beginning of the 4th century, the churches had not only corporate possession of places of worship and of burial, but also had other property pertaining to the whole community, and not to any one individual. The edict of Milan[2] expressly refers to this.

In 272, as we shall see, the Emperor Aurelian intervened in a dispute, between the Catholic community at Antioch and some schismatics over the possession of the Bishop's house.[3] After Valerian's persecution, Dionysius of Alexandria and other bishops were invited to present themselves before the fiscal agents, that their sequestrated

[1] It was impossible to exclude pagans or heretics by such a formula as the "AD RELIGIONEM PERTINENTES MEAM," employed by the deceased to denote those members of his family who were to be buried in his tomb. Christianity being *religio illicita*, could not invoke the protection of the law (De Rossi, *Bull.*, 1865, pp. 54, 92).

[2] "Christiani non ea loca tantum ad quae convenire solebant sed etiam alia habuisse noscuntur ad ius corporis eorum, id est ecclesiarum, non hominum singulorum pertinentia." Lactantius, *De mort. persec.* 48; Eusebius x. 5 (Edict of Maximin). The basilica of St Lawrence, in Rome, possessed, as early as the time of Constantine, a piece of ground, *quod fiscus occupaverat tempore persecutionis* (*Liber pontif*, vol. i., p. 182).

[3] Eusebius vii. 30.

possessions might be restored. It was clearly as ecclesiastical property, and not merely as property used by the Church, that the churches and cemeteries were confiscated in 257. There is evidence of this earlier still. Under Alexander Severus (222), a dispute arose between certain tavern-keepers and the Christian community of Rome, over the ownership of some land, formerly State property; the matter was brought before the prince, who decided in favour of the Christians.[1] Perhaps it was he who authorized them to hold property. The *Christianos esse passus est* of Lampridius (c. 22) seems also to refer to their corporate existence, for their personal safety had hardly been in danger under Alexander's immediate predecessors.

The churches which, according to Origen, were destroyed in 235, by Maximin's order, appear to have belonged to Christian communities. There seems no doubt that the cemetery given into the charge of Callistus (198) by Pope Zephyrinus, belonged to the community, as also those Carthaginian *areae sepulturarum*, known to be the property of Christians in Tertullian's time.[2] Ecclesiastical property clearly, therefore, existed in the 3rd century, and probably very early in the century. Under cover of what law, or legal fiction? Was it by means of the elastic legislation for burial clubs,[3] favoured by Septimius Severus? The common folk were allowed to combine, in order to provide for themselves decent burial: these associations were allowed to collect monthly subscriptions, to hold property, and to have religious meetings; they were represented by an *actor*, an official authorized to act in

[1] Lampridius *Alex. Sev.* 49: "*Cum Christiani quendam locum qui publicus fuerat occupassent, contra popinarii dicerent sibi eum deberi, rescripsit melius esse ut quemadmodumcumque illic Deus colatur quam popinariis dedatur.*" The allusion points clearly to a place set apart for divine worship, belonging to the Christian community, and not to private property belonging to any individual Christian.

[2] *Ad Scap.* 3.

[3] De Rossi, *Roma sott.*, vol. i., p. 101; vol. ii., p. viii.; *Bull.*, 1864, p. 57; 1865, p. 90.

their name. Inscriptions prove that these clubs abounded throughout the empire. Why should not the Christian societies have enjoyed these privileges? They took special care of their graves; why should they not have appeared in the character of burial clubs, thus sheltering themselves under the protection of the law?

Why? For several reasons. First of all, they had a great repugnance to these clubs. Tertullian, who has left a famous parallel[1] between the pagan clubs and Christian associations, brings out, with his usual force, the points in which they differed. A Spanish bishop, who had ventured to join one of these clubs, and allowed his children to be buried by them, incurred ecclesiastical censure in consequence.[2] Moreover, the law as to these burial clubs laid down, as a primary condition, that they must not infringe the decision prohibiting illicit associations.

Now, what association was more illicit than Christianity? It would therefore have been necessary to keep their Christian character from the knowledge of the authorities. This would have been extremely difficult. The burial clubs were small associations, numbering only a few dozen people. The Church of a large town, like Rome, Carthage, or Alexandria, in the middle of the 3rd century, might easily number from thirty to forty thousand. It would have been difficult to pass off such a multitude as a funeral club.[3]

To me, it seems more probable that if, after the death of Marcus Aurelius, the Christian communities enjoyed long intervals of peace, and if they were able to hold important and valuable property, it was due to the fact that, without any legal subterfuge, they were tolerated, or even recognised, as churches or religious societies. Tertullian proclaimed in the market-place, that the Christian society was a religious society:

[1] *Apol.* 39. [2] See Cyprian, *Ep.* lxvii. 6.

[3] Beside the argument from expediency, some have thought they discerned indications that the Roman Church availed itself of the burial club legislation; but these indications are extremely slight, and of very doubtful significance.

Corpus sumus de conscientia religionis, etc. He might have saved himself the trouble. The fact was common knowledge. In his day, the idea of a Christian was inseparable from the idea of a member of a religious society. The religious meetings, the religious bond which united all believers, were the first things to be noticed and evil-spoken of. Therefore, to tolerate the Christians meant to tolerate the Christian body; to persecute the Christians meant to persecute the collective entity they necessarily formed. This entity, which grew and strengthened, might appear dangerous to the safety of the empire; then, extermination was the remedy. But it might appear innocuous. The peril was not apparent to Commodus, the Syrian Emperors, Gallienus, nor even to Valerian, Aurelian, and Diocletian, at the beginning of their reigns. It was natural to recoil from the destruction of so many people, and from the extermination of a society, which had successfully resisted so many efforts to destroy it. Some emperors went even farther. When Gallienus wrote to the bishops to come and claim their churches, when Aurelian evicted Paul of Samosata from the Church of Antioch, the Christians must certainly have been tempted to consider themselves authorised, both as individuals, and as a body.

To sum up—the emperors of the 3rd century each took up a very decided attitude towards the Church; either they persecuted it openly, or they tolerated it. They never ignored it. The places of meeting, the cemeteries, the names and dwelling-places of the leaders were known to the city magistrates and to the Government. If a persecuting edict came, they knew where to find the bishop; they arrested him, and confiscated the places of worship and all the Church property. The edict was revoked, and again they turned to the bishop in order to restore the confiscated property. Of legal fictions, of funeral associations, of mysterious title deeds, the documents bear no trace. All transactions take place direct between the Government and the Christians as a body. Christianity was still prohibited in theory; no imperial

rescript ever recognised it as a *religio licita*, or pronounced the Christian communities to be authorised associations. The legal restrictions were still there. But it became more and more impossible to take them seriously. The marvellous luxuriance of the Lord's Vine burst asunder all bonds.

CHAPTER XX

AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY AND THE ROMAN CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 3RD CENTURY—CYPRIAN

Native tribes of North Africa—Phœnician colonization: Carthage—Roman colonization and administration—Rise of Christianity—Tertullian—Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage—His retreat during the Decian persecution—Factious confessors and apostates—Relations with Rome—Novatian's schism—Pope Cornelius—Schism of Felicissimus at Carthage—Pope Stephen—His controversy with the African Church on the rebaptism of heretics—Martyrdom of Cyprian.

1. *The African Provinces*

THE Africa of the ancients lay, like a great island, between the desert and the sea, the Syrtes and the Ocean. The first known inhabitants were of a race not unlike the European races. In ancient history these tribes, now all designated by the common appellation of Berbers or Kabyles, were grouped under various names—Maziques, Moors, Numidians, and Getuli. They never constituted a single state, and rarely formed combinations of any importance for long. The tribal system, still in force there, especially to the west, seems to suit them best. But it leaves them ill-protected against an invader; they are, therefore, at the mercy of colonizing strangers.

The first of these colonists were the Phœnicians. Carthage, founded to be Queen of the Western seas, became in addition the mother-city of the African continent. Its houses of business fringed the whole coast, and it spread itself far into the interior, into the fertile

valley of the Bagradas, and even further, into the fruitful regions afterwards known as Byzacium and Numidia. This whole country was studded with towns and villages, where Canaanite customs, institutions, and language prevailed. Behind this zone of colonization, permeated by Phœnician civilization, lay the Berber country, which was opening up to the political influence of the Carthaginians, and still more to their commerce.

The conflict with Rome put a stop to this expansion. After the Second Punic War, Carthage was excluded from the sea, and retained in the African continent but a small domain, corresponding roughly to that part of the interior where Phœnician was spoken. Beyond, stretched the kingdoms of Numidia and Mauritania. Massinissa having sided with the conquerors, these survived the final catastrophe (146 B.C.). The Romans destroyed Carthage and annexed her territory; but at first they did no more. The Latin colonization only began a century later, when Cæsar (44 B.C.) restored Rome's ancient rival, annexed the kingdom of Numidia, and welded this new Africa (*Africa nova*) and the province already existing (*Africa vetus*) into one single province. Colonies of Latin emigrants settled not only on the site of Carthage but in some of the other coast towns, and even in the interior. The Phœnician municipalities were reorganised on the Roman system; the *suffetæ* were replaced by *duumvirs*, the ancient Canaanite gods, by the gods of Rome, and the Punic tongue by Latin. Then Berber, lying beyond the Carthaginian colonies, was penetrated, and gradually many Latin cities sprang up there.

Yet, the land was far from being completely Latinized. Phœnician was long spoken in the country districts, as was Celtic in Gaul, and Coptic in Egypt. Finally, it was supplanted, but only much later, and probably not until the Arabs abolished it and Latin together. The native Berber tongue held its ground then, and has continued in use, through many changes, right down to the present day. Berber was also the language of the native states of Numidia and Mauritania, which long survived the Punic

state, and of the Getuli and other independent tribes on the borders of the Roman territory. It held its own, with all the Berber institutions, in a number of little isolated autonomous districts in the interior of these provinces. These were governed either by native chiefs, or by Roman administrators.

To maintain the Roman authority among a people still so far behind the civilization of Rome, an army was indispensable. The pro-consul, though responsible to the Senate, had, contrary to custom, a legion under his command. This led to difficulties. To end them, it was decided (37 A.D.) to separate Numidia from the pro-consular province, and to administer it through the legate of the legion. The pro-consular province extended from Hippo (Bone) on the west to Tripolis; and Numidia spread south in a fan-shape, from the sea-coast between the river Ampsaga (Oued-el-Kebir) and the territory of Hippo, till with a long line of frontier it faced the desert tribes. The head-quarters were at the foot of the Auras range, first at Theveste, and then at Lambesis.

The kingdom of Mauritania, which lay to the west of the Ampsaga, retained its independence till 40 A.D., when it was annexed and divided into two provinces, Mauritania Cæsariensis, and Mauritania Tingitana, which took their names from their capitals, Cæsarea (Cherchell) and Tingi (Tangiers). Here, colonization began too late, and was necessarily less successful than in the eastern provinces. The Roman stations did not extend so far south; and the mountains on the coast continued to be held by independent tribes. In Tingitana, the number of Roman towns was very small, and almost all were on the coast of the Atlantic. The interior no more became Latin than it had become Phœnician. The province of Bætica, in Spain, was continually threatened by the pirates of the Riff, over whom the Roman authorities had as little control as have the authorities of Morocco now.

Mauritania and the eastern provinces were treated by the Romans on very different lines, and they were divided by a chain of custom-houses. In Mauritania, the year was

not reckoned according to the *fasti consulares* of Rome, but according to a peculiar provincial system. The governors were merely procurators, as in the little civilized Alpine districts.

2. *Rise of Christianity—Tertullian*

No information, even legendary, exists as to the foundation of the Carthaginian and other African churches.[1] From whatever country their first apostles came, the Carthaginian Christians early took their lead from Rome. Their most frequent communications were with Rome; they were deeply concerned with all that occurred there; every intellectual movement, every disciplinary, ritual, or literary event in Rome was echoed at once in Carthage. The writings of Tertullian attest this, and also those of St Cyprian, and indeed all the documents of the African Church so long as its history lasted.

Like other new importations, Christianity spread rather quickly from Carthage, through the African colonies. It is possible that it made conquests even beyond.[2] As a rule, however, the Christian missions did not leave the lines of Latin influence. Although the Gospel was preached in Punic and in the Berber tongue, yet, in these lands, Christianity always remained a Latin religion. The Bible was never translated into these native idioms, as it was into Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, or Gothic. And indeed, who wrote in Berber or in Punic? Literature there, whether Christian or pagan, was always Latin. It has never been suggested that the liturgy was celebrated except in Latin.[3] And if exceptions existed,

[1] The documents collected by Monceaux (*Hist. litt. de l'Afrique chrétienne*, vol. i., p. 5) do not represent native legends, but only Byzantine compilations of late date, with no foundation in local tradition.

[2] Tertullian (*Adv. Judeos* i.) mentions, as converted to Christ, *Getulorum varietates et Maurorum multi fines.* But we have reason to distrust his exaggeration.

[3] This does not apply to sermons; even in the time of St Augustine, preaching still went on in Punic. And a knowledge of this language was indispensable for the exercise of the ministry in certain localities.

they were certainly in Greek, and not in any native dialect.

This was a cause of weakness, as the bad days of the Arab invasions proved. Christianity, being too closely connected with Latin institutions, did not survive them.

The most ancient memorial of African Christianity we possess, relates, not to Carthage, but to Scilli, a town in pro-consular Numidia.[1] Here were arrested the martyrs whom in 180 the pro-consul Vigellius Saturninus concondemned at Carthage. This magistrate was the first to take action against African Christians.[2] He had many successors. The reign of the African Severus was not a time of peace for the Christians of his native land. Tertullian was continually writing to defend them. On March 7, 203, Carthage was the scene of the martyrdom of two young women from *Thuburbo Minus*, Perpetua and Felicitas, who died in company with a group of their fellow-countrymen, all neophytes or catechumens. The story of their captivity and martyrdom, written almost entirely by Perpetua herself, is one of the gems of early Christian literature. It was preserved, in a setting of his own reflections, by someone sharing Tertullian's views on visions and prophesying: perhaps Tertullian himself.

In the time of Severus and Caracalla, Tertullian was the most prominent person in the Carthaginian Church. The son of a centurion of the pro-consular cohort, he had, when still a pagan, cultivated literature and the law,[3] and spent some time in Rome. After his conversion, he settled at Carthage, where he was soon raised to the priesthood.

[1] Pro-consular Numidia was such part of the ancient kingdom of Numidia, or *Africa nova*, as fell to the pro-consulate, when the province was divided between the pro-consul and the legate. Scilli has not yet been identified.

[2] Tertullian, *Ad Scap.* 3, relates that he became blind.

[3] It is not absolutely impossible that he was the lawyer Tertullian, of whose writings some fragments are included in the Digest. i. 3, 27; xxix. i. 23; xlviii. 2, 28; xlix. 17, 4.

From 197 A.D., he is found, pen in hand, exhorting the martyrs, and upholding Christianity in the face of its pagan opponents, and pleading for it against the cruelties of the pro-consul. His earliest works exhibit all his characteristics—burning rhetoric, inexhaustible vigour, profound knowledge of his time, familiarity with the past and the books recording it, and also the aggressive and quibbling spirit traceable in all his writings. For twenty years he never ceased contending with pagans, magistrates, Jews, and heretics—Marcion in particular—intervening in every doctrinal controversy, or question of casuistry, and treating them all in the same uncompromising manner. For ever a fighter, for ever in a state of nervous irritation, at last, not satisfied with opponents outside the Church, he fell foul of those within who were less harsh and intolerant than himself. In this state of mind, he was easily won over to the Montanists. Then in the name of the Paraclete, he vociferated to his heart's content against second marriages, against Christians who became soldiers, artists, or officials, against those who did not veil their daughters, or practise sufficient mortification, and against bishops who took upon them to restore penitents to communion. The humiliation of accepting the Phrygian revelations, which a man like Tertullian must have felt keenly, was no doubt the price paid for this freedom of speech. But he found compensations. His impetuous and picturesque eloquence inspired the ecstatic utterances of the women, through whom the Paraclete spoke. In his sect, he was supreme. In Africa, the Montanists were called Tertullianists.[1]

But beneath these storms, the main body of the Church of Carthage and all its African branches continued their ordinary Christian lives. Their history remains unknown: and Tertullian's writings give no insight into its details. No bishop is mentioned in his authentic writings. *The Passion of St Perpetua* alludes to Bishop Optatus, and to a certain Aspasius, a priest and teacher, who neither hit it off with each other, nor succeeded in keeping the peace

[1] See p. 203 of this volume.

in their flocks. Perhaps this Optatus was Bishop of Carthage.[1] Later, appears a certain Agrippinus, under whom a great African Council decided against the validity of heretical baptism. This council was an innovation. The custom of holding bishops' meetings had not begun in Africa in Tertullian's time.[2] But it took root soon afterwards, and it was indeed in Africa that synodical action became most fully consolidated.

An event, which must have made a great stir throughout Christian Africa,[3] was the condemnation of Privatus, Bishop of Lambesis. Though this city was the headquarters of the Roman legion, and the usual residence of the legate, and was the most important in the district after Carthage, it does not seem to have contained many Christians. Privatus was condemned for heresy by a Council of ninety bishops. The number is interesting, as showing how widespread Christianity already was in the African provinces. Donatus, Bishop of Carthage, and Pope Fabian both wrote letters, severely censuring Privatus. If only these letters were still extant, we should know exactly into what heresy the Bishop of Lambesis had fallen. The intervention of Fabian and Donatus fixes the date as between 236 A.D. and 248.

Donatus was succeeded, in 249, by St Cyprian, whose writings throw a great light upon the African Church and its relations with the Church of Rome, during the next ten years.

3. *St Cyprian and the Decian Persecution*

Cœcilius Cyprianus,[4] before his conversion, belonged to the best society in Africa. Rich, or at least in easy circumstances, highly cultivated, an expert rhetorician and master of eloquence, and in great request as a lawyer, he had troops of friends amongst the best people of his day.

[1] He is generally regarded as such; but it is possible that he may have been Bishop of *Thuburbo Minus*.

[2] *De jejun.* 13. This book was written about the year 220; it is one of Tertullian's last writings.

[3] Cyprian, *Ep.* 69.

[4] He was also called Thascius.

There was nothing to suggest that he would one day throw in his lot with the Christians, and become one of their leaders. Nevertheless, in the prime of manhood, his soul opened out to higher issues. Touched by grace, he asked for, and received baptism (246 A.D.), a venerable priest, Cæcilian, helping him to take the first steps. He was amazed at the great inner change which at once came over him. He has given us a picture of this joy of his conversion, in his book *Ad Donatum*, the earliest of his writings.

His was a complete conversion. Cyprian not only renounced the world and his fortune, which he distributed in great part amongst the poor, but even all secular literature. Tertullian and St Jerome, though they reviled poets, orators, and philosophers, continued to read and to quote them. But Cyprian, once a Christian, abjured all literature except the Bible. He soon became thoroughly conversant with it, and has left two collections of Scripture passages, classified and grouped according to subjects, *i.e.*, controversy with the Jews, justification of the rules of Christian life, and exhortation to the confessors to persevere even unto blood.[1] These extracts bear witness, as indeed do all his writings, to his great familiarity with the books of the Old and New Testament.

Shortly after his conversion, he was admitted to the bench of presbyters; then, the See of Carthage falling vacant, he was almost unanimously elected bishop. Some of the priests, however, opposed the election of the neophyte, and in spite of his later efforts at conciliation, always maintained an attitude of antagonism towards him.

He had not been bishop more than about a year, when the Decian persecution broke over the Church. Those around him thought, and he felt also, that being so well known in Carthage, he would inevitably be arrested, and that in such an acute crisis, the bishop's life would count for more than would his martyrdom. He left the town, and found a safe retreat outside, where he evaded the

[1] *Testimonia ad Quirinum*, i.-iii., *ad Fortunatum.*

search of the authorities, but yet kept up communications with his flock, and especially with those clergy who had contrived to remain with them.

The situation was extremely serious. In the long peace which had preceded the persecution, the African Christians had deteriorated strangely. Tertullian, from the height of his uncompromising severity, had not spared the "psychics." But even the milder Cyprian was hardly less displeased with his Africans. According to him, they clung to the good things of this life, were greedy of gain, harsh, spiteful, inattentive to the admonitions of those above them, and given to mixed marriages, which drew them into the pagan world. The women painted their faces, the priests were hardly religious; the deacons were scarcely respectable; bishops held posts in the financial administration, and neglected their ministry for the sake of those duties; and whilst their poor died of hunger, they frequented markets, made fortunes, and did not shrink even from fraud or usury.

Such Christians, led by such priests, could not be expected to be very heroic. And their behaviour, in face of persecution, was lamentable. The first threat, even of confiscation, let alone death, was too much for most of them. The Carthaginian magistrates and the other special officials were at once overwhelmed by the crowd of apostates, demanding certificates of sacrifice (*libelli*). There were defections even among the clergy. Still, a fair number of priests and deacons succeeded in evading the search, as did a good many of the laity; and a few confessors were imprisoned.

The retirement of the bishop was naturally not approved by all. In Rome especially, where there was no very clear idea of the position of Cyprian in Carthage, and the special risks he ran, the criticism was very severe. Shortly after the death of Fabian, a sub-deacon from Carthage, named Crementius, arrived in Rome; the priests gave him two letters: one, addressed to Cyprian, informed him of the martyrdom of his brother-bishop; the other, written in accordance with the news brought from Carthage

by Crementius, bore neither address nor signature; but the text showed clearly that it was intended for the clergy of Carthage. Both were delivered to Cyprian at the same time. The second astonished him considerably. The writers addressed the clergy of Carthage, as if they were no longer under the rule of their bishop: "We have heard," they said, "that the holy Pope Cyprian has left the city. We are told that he has acted rightly, being an eminent person (*persona insignis*)." The Roman presbyterate, however, evidently did not consider this reason a sufficient one; for they at once alluded to the parable of the Good Shepherd who died for his sheep (Fabian), as compared with the hireling (Cyprian) who deserted them on the approach of the wolf. A little further on in the letter, the lapse of certain apostate Christians in Rome was attributed to the fact that they also were "eminent persons" (*quod essent insignes personae*). This imported a bad meaning into the term *insignis persona*, and the tone of the letter was not such as to minimize the effect. The clergy of Rome dwelt much on their own laudable virtue, and on the zeal with which they had played their part during the persecution. They held themselves up as an example to the Carthaginian clergy, and did not spare them some rather severely expressed advice.

Cyprian could not but be hurt; and so indeed he was. He wrote at once to Rome (*Ep.* 9) to acknowledge the letter informing him of Fabian's martyrdom, and congratulated the Roman Church on the glory it reflected on her. As to the instructions sent to the clergy of Carthage, he made as though he had no knowledge of their real origin, or rather, he expressed doubts as to their being drawn up by the Roman presbyters. "I have read," he says, "another letter, without address or signature. The writing, the matter, and even the paper it was written on, have astonished me a little. Perhaps something has been omitted or altered. I return it to you as it is, so that you may see whether it is really the letter you entrusted to the sub-deacon Crementius."

The reply of the Roman clergy is lost, but it is apparent

that this convinced Cyprian that false reports regarding him had been carried to Rome. He felt it necessary to justify himself. To this end, he sent to Rome copies of thirteen letters he had written to the priests, deacons, confessors, and others in his church.[1] These documents were well fitted to show that he had in no wise abandoned his pastoral duties. At the same time, he gave the reasons for his retirement. The clergy and confessors of Rome, who were still corresponding directly with the clergy of Carthage, now grasped the situation, and expressed approval of the conduct of Cyprian. They also transferred their correspondence to the hands of another scribe, and the eloquent Novatian took the place of the hasty and incorrect writer of the first letter.

This change of attitude may perhaps have been effected at some cost to Cyprian's dignity, but it gained for him some very opportune support. The last letters in the collection he sent to Rome show clearly the difficulties of the peculiar situation in Carthage, which was due to an unexpected alliance between the confessors and the lapsed. Many of the confessors were simple folk, and the morality of some was elementary. Some amongst them had confessed the faith, and borne torture, rather out of bravado, than from deliberate religious conviction. The universal respect accorded to the martyrs, the honour rendered to them after death, the extreme veneration, the solicitude, and the personal attentions which surrounded the imprisoned confessors, were all calculated to turn heads that were not very strong. These good folk were inclined to set themselves much above the ordinary Christian, to consider themselves great authorities on religious questions, and, if occasion offered, to step into the place of the properly constituted spiritual leaders. The situation in Carthage was aggravated by the bishop's being absent and a fugitive. The populace did not grasp the reasons which had induced him to conceal himself; they kept all their enthusiasm for the heroes who had endured the rack and the wooden horse, scourging, and all the other atrocities of

[1] *Ep.* 5, 6, 7, 10-19.

prison, and who now awaited but the final award to ascend to Heaven, and reign with Christ.

Such feelings were very prevalent, not only amongst the faithful laity who had not apostatized (*stantes*), but also, and above all, amongst the *lapsi*, *i.e.*, those who had, in a greater or lesser degree, compromised themselves by obeying the edict; finding or believing they were now pretty safe, they tried to return to the communion of the Church. But that was not so easy. Discipline demanded a life-long penance for apostasy. No doubt, as the guilty were so many, a relaxation of the old rules would be necessary; but in the midst of a persecution, it was not possible to consider so important a question, to weigh the different cases, and duly apportion the penance to the degree of guilt in each individual instance. It was therefore laid down, in Carthage and in Rome, that the question of the lapsed should be reserved untouched, until the bishops could again resume the personal oversight of their flocks, take counsel together, and thus give their decisions with due authority and uniformity. Until then, the *lapsi* must do penance, and abstain from communion.[1]

This seemed too long a delay to those concerned. Besides which, the five priests who had opposed Cyprian at his election, and who, no doubt, had calumniated him in Rome, interfered; they took upon themselves to receive the *lapsi* to communion, and to celebrate for them, or in their houses. All that they required was a letter of recommendation from some confessor on the eve of martyrdom. The bishops indeed were in the habit of recognizing letters of recommendation from martyrs, as availing to shorten the length of canonical penance. But this indulgence was not supposed to be granted direct by the martyrs themselves, nor, above all, to be dispensed *ad lib.* The confessors, and in particular, a certain Lucian, who gave himself out as the representative of an already-

[1] At first, Cyprian excluded indigent apostates from the alms of the Church. This was natural enough. But the Roman Church was more indulgent on this point, and their example led him to be more lenient.

executed martyr, called Paul, distributed letters of indulgence broadcast. As a matter of form, the *lapsi* were to present themselves before the bishop; but the letters of recommendation were peremptory. We feel, in reading them, that these good people felt they had public opinion behind them, and that it would be difficult to refuse them anything. Cyprian, in his letters to them, did his best to show respect and to be conciliatory, whilst he tried to reason with them, and to safeguard his own authority.

But, in spite of all his good will, his condescension and humility, he could not always accede to their wishes. The letters often covered whole families, large, ill-defined groups. *Communicet ille cum suis*, they wrote to the bishop. The *cum suis* was as vague as the *communicet* was unceremonious. Cyprian objected. The reply was a letter, in which the confessors passed a sponge over all the apostasies of Africa. The Bishop of Carthage was desired to see this strange dictum of the new ecclesiastical authority carried out in his own Church, and to transmit it to the other bishops of the province.

The situation was strained. Undoubtedly, the bishop was backed up by the best of the clergy and laity; and some of the confessors disapproved of Lucian's conduct, and of his audacious distribution of indulgences. But wise men are always in the minority, especially in times of crisis. Cyprian felt the need of support from the authority of the Roman Church, and specially, from its confessors, of whom several, such as the priests Moyses and Maximus, had been in prison for many months; and letters were written to him, expressing high approbation of his conduct. At the same time, he took every opportunity of showing his respect for the martyrs; admitting amongst his own clergy some of the worthiest confessors, though naturally not choosing those who were mixed up with the indulgence business.

But the opposition was not disarmed: on the contrary, it consolidated itself, being still led by the five factious priests. A certain Novatus was specially prominent among them. A rich and influential layman, Felicissimus, strongly

supported this party. Towards the end of 250, Cyprian having sent a commission of bishops and priests to Carthage to prepare for his return and distribute his alms, Felicissimus did all he could to defeat this object, and to undermine the authority of the bishop. Cyprian had to defend himself. By his orders, his commissaries in Carthage excommunicated Felicissimus with his chief adherents. The rebel priests had already put themselves out of communion with the bishop. One of them, Novatus, set out for Rome, to secure for the faction at Carthage the support of the new pope, who, as the persecution in Rome was abating, was sure to be elected ere long.

After Easter, that is, in April 251, Cyprian was able to return to his troubled Church. He had addressed his agitated flock in two pastoral letters, on the position of the lapsed, and on the schism.[1]

According to his long-announced intention, he called together a council of African bishops, to pronounce authoritatively upon these outstanding questions.

4. *The Schism of Novatian*

During this time, Novatus was at work, trying to cause a division in the Roman Church. In Rome, as in Carthage, the confessors were held in high esteem. Those still in prison were specially surrounded with homage, and consulted as oracles. Novatus began by getting into touch with Novatian, who was easily influenced; and then he tried to win over the confessors. At first, he did not succeed. Moyses was loyal to Cyprian, and declared that he would have no communion with the faction of the five contumacious priests of Carthage. But after his death, in January or February 251, his fellow-captives were gained over, and threw in their lot with the party of Novatus and Novatian. The object of their intrigues was to bring about the election of a pope, who would not recognize Cyprian as the legitimate Bishop of Carthage, and who would protect the rival who was to be brought forward. As yet, they had no distinctive platform either

[1] *De Lapsis*, *De Ecclesiae unitate.*

of dogma or discipline, but they intended, in Rome, as in Africa, to make capital of the prestige of the confessors. The future successor of St Peter must be the confessors' pope, as in Carthage the anti-Cyprianite party proclaimed themselves the confessors' party.

Their intrigues came to nothing. The election took place about the middle of March: the enemies of Cyprian failed to prevent the choice of a candidate who was alien to their views—the priest Cornelius. They at once made a violent attack on him, accusing him, amongst other crimes, of having received a certificate of sacrifice, and of having communicated with open apostates. Novatus saw to it that an ill-intentioned protest should reach Carthage at the same time as the news of the ordination of Cornelius. It was drawn up in the name of a priest of Rome, probably Novatian. Cyprian, and the African bishops who were beginning to gather round him, saw that exact information was desirable: so they awaited the official reports of the election, and even despatched two bishops to Rome. During this delay,[1] the party opposed to Cornelius elected another bishop, Novatian himself,[2] and

[1] Two phases are to be distinguished in Novatian's opposition. First, a protest was made against Cornelius and his election, without going any further. St Cyprian draws a clear distinction between the two stages of the question and the two embassies which the schismatics sent in succession to Carthage. *Ep.* xlv. 1: "Diversae partis obstinata et inflexibilis pervicacia non tantum radicis et matris sinum adque complexum recusavit, sed etiam gliscente et in peius recrudescente discordia episcopum sibi constituit . . . c. 3. Cum ad me talia adversum te et conpresbyteri tecum considentis scripta venissent." Here, the first letter against Cornelius is in question, that written by Novatian, when he was still a priest. Cyprian notes (*Ep.* lv. 8) that Cornelius became Bishop, when Fabian's place (*i.e.* Peter's) was vacant; this could not have been said of Novatian.

[2] Cornelius, in one of his letters to Fabius of Antioch (Eusebius vi. 43) says that Novatian sought out, in some obscure corner of Italy, three bishops, all simple and uneducated men (ἀγροίκους καὶ ἁπλουστάτους), who, having drunk deep, consecrated him. One of them afterwards craved pardon of Cornelius, who admitted him to lay communion; the others were immediately deposed from their bishoprics. I have only made (p. 236 of this volume) and only make here a very cautious use of the details of this letter to Fabius, in which Novatian is abused

did their best to obtain his recognition by the whole Church. On receiving this news and other intelligence from Rome, Cyprian officially recognized Cornelius.

Thus the Novatianist schism, which gave birth to an important sect, did not arise from a doctrinal, but from a personal question. Novatian had no special views on penance. Novatus' antecedents in Carthage show him to have been favourable, rather than opposed, to some relaxation of discipline. During the controversies of the preceding year, Novatian had drawn up the letters of the Roman clergy and confessors, those letters which, St Cyprian tells us,[1] "were sent throughout the whole world, and reached all the churches and all believers." Now, in these letters, two points were laid down: first, that the *lapsi* were to be admitted to penance, of which the duration and the conditions were to be referred to the bishops, who would give their decision when peace was re-established: and further, that apostates in danger of death might be readmitted to communion.[2] During the persecution, Novatian had succeeded in evading the authorities, but had given no proof of any extraordinary heroism.[3] No one could have forseen that he would become the champion of exclusive rigorism. But when once the schism was organized, it was inevitably bound to take up an attitude and principles opposed to those of Cornelius on this burning question.

About the middle of May, the Council of Carthage, with Cyprian as president, met at last, and ruled that all penitent *lapsi*, without distinction, should be admitted to penance, and in the hour of death, at least, reconciled to the Church; that the length of the penance should depend on the gravity of the case; that bishops, priests, and

with the violence then customary in controversy. The writer of this document clearly overshoots the mark; *e.g.*, when he attributes to the devil the conversion of Novatian, doubts the validity of his baptism, and turns his theological knowledge into ridicule. Several of the shafts, directed against his troublesome rival, also hit Pope Fabian (for it was undoubtedly he who ordained Novatian priest), and also the leaders of the Roman Church during the Decian persecution.

[1] *Ep.* lv. 5. [2] *Ep.* xxx. 8. [3] Eusebius vi. 43, § 16.

other clergy might be admitted to penance, like the rest, but not reinstated in their office. These decisions were transmitted to Rome. Cornelius, like most of the Roman clergy, shared the views of the African bishops. Nevertheless, wishing to settle a matter which concerned so many with the fullest possible authority, he himself summoned a Council of all the Italian bishops.

Then the different positions began to define themselves, and the party of Novatian appeared as that in favour of the most puritanical rigorism. No peace between the Church and the deserters!—perpetual anathemas on the idolaters! So ran the watchword of the new sect. They did not, indeed, forbid the apostates to do penance; on the contrary, they urged it on them vehemently, though depriving them of all hope of readmission to the congregation, even at their last hour. This was the discipline formerly meted out to adulterers, as well as apostates; but it had been for long reserved exclusively for the latter. Novatian and his followers insisted that this must continue, and that the concession granted to adultery ought not to be extended to apostasy. This summed up primitive Novatianism. Once separated from the Church, however, the sect soon fell into new and additional varieties of dissent. In the beginning, it only protested against the relaxation of a point of discipline, which, though rightly adopted and applied at a time when only isolated cases of apostasy occurred,[1] could not be enforced in the face of the innumerable defections, produced by a persecution of universal and unusual severity.

Theoretically, this position was a strong one, and it gives the key to the relative success of the new schism. The personal influence of Novatian helped the schism much, as did the prodigious activity with which his adherents, Novatus in particular, strove to discredit Cornelius. The Council of Rome assembled. There were present sixty bishops, not to mention the priests and deacons of Rome, and those who accompanied, or repre-

[1] That this continued to be the discipline at ordinary times was clearly shown at the Council of Elvira, at the end of the 3rd century.

sented their bishops. The letters from the Council of Carthage were read to the assembly. They set forth the principle to be applied in restoring the lapsed to communion, and invited the Italian bishops to condemn the founder of the new schism. This hope was fulfilled: Novatian and his followers were expelled from the Church, and the disciplinary ruling of the Council of Africa was solemnly approved. These decisions were embodied in a synodical letter, signed by all the bishops present, and agreed to by all those absent.

Strengthened by this two-fold manifesto from the episcopates of Italy and Africa, Cornelius hastened to send out, in all directions, copies of the proceedings of the Synod, together with a full account of Novatian and his schism. In Africa, Cyprian supported him with energy; the waverers were but few and isolated.[1] Nevertheless, Bishop Euaristus, one of the consecrators of Novatian, came to Carthage, with a Roman deacon, Nicostratus, a confessor of the last persecution, and several others; and they succeeded in organizing a small Novatianist Church in the African capital, with a certain Maximus as bishop. No doubt a similar success followed in other places. In Gaul, Bishop Marcian, of Arles, joined the sect of Novatian, and treated apostates on his lines. This is the only serious case of defection recorded in the West.

In the East, things went much further. Novatian's views found a footing in various parts of Asia Minor. The Bishop of Antioch, Fabius, openly became their patron. He, however, did not long occupy the See, and his brethren of Syria, Cappadocia, and Cilicia took a different view, so that the movement was soon got under. He had also against him the very considerable weight of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, who was of the same mind as Cornelius and Cyprian. From the time of the persecution, he had ordered the restoration to communion of all the lapsed, in the hour of death; and at the first sign of peace, he circulated, throughout Egypt, a sort of penitential tariff, wherein the different degrees of guilt

[1] See especially the letter to Antoninus (Ep. lv.).

were classified, and each accorded their proper penalty. Novatian's letters made no impression on him; he answered them candidly, but gently, as was his way, telling Cornelius' rival that the best thing for him to do, was to drop his pretentions to the episcopate. Dionysius also applied himself zealously to win back the Roman confessors, who had been led into schism. This was a matter of great importance, and Cyprian also threw himself into it, with equal spirit. These two great bishops, whose positions and careers present so many points of resemblance, had independently taken up the same attitude, and they were successful. The Roman confessors nearly all repented, abandoned Novatian, and returned to the Church, where Cornelius and his followers readily received them, even restoring those who had held office in the Church to their former position. In the eyes of the Christian masses, this proved very damaging to Novatian's prestige, and Cornelius and his two allies, Dionysius and Cyprian, gave wide publicity to these opportune retractations.

Besides the letters against Novatianism, written for that purpose, there also exists a sort of homily, entitled *Ad Novatianum*, wherein he is severely taken to task. It seems to have been written in Rome.[1]

But his little church still managed to exist; a certain number of believers, "firm in the Gospel,"[2] still clung to Novatian. He, in addition to his controversial writings, poured out practical treatises for his disciples. We have specimens of this literature, in his *De cibis judaicis*, probably also in the *De spectaculis*, and the *De bono pudicitiae*. These, and some other works[3] attributed to him, have come down to us through St Cyprian. A good many others were known to St Jerome.[4] The above-

[1] M. Harnack thinks it the work of Xystus II. (*Texte und U.*, vol. xiii. 1; *cf.* vol. xx., 3, p. 116; *Chronologie*, vol. ii., p. 387).

[2] *Novatianus plebi in Evangelio perstanti salutem*, title of *De cibis*.

[3] *Adversus Judaeos*, *De laude martyrii*, *Quod idola dii non sint*.

[4] *De Pascha*, *De sabbato*, *De circumcisione*, *De sacerdote*, *De oratione*, *De instantia*, *De Attalo*.

mentioned works have this in common, that they were written during a time of persecution, either under Gallus or Valerian, when Novatian was separated from his disciples According to a tradition of his sect,[1] he was a victim of the persecution under Valerian.

The party in Carthage in favour of clemency had been for months, in their campaign against Cyprian, making capital out of the vanity of the confessors, and the indecent haste of the *lapsi*. They must have been much surprised at the turn things were taking in Rome. Novatus, going from one extreme to another, was with the Roman confessors, organizing a party on severely puritan and rigorist lines.

On the other hand, the Council of 251, by its clemency to the *libellatics*, and other less deeply involved apostates, deprived the promoters of the schism of a good number of sympathizers. Felicissimus, on his side, tried to strengthen his position. He had himself ordained deacon, that is treasurer, of the opposition Church they were founding. They scoured Africa to beat up recruits, especially from the episcopate, hoping to set up a rival council to Cyprian's, to depose Cyprian himself, and to establish the lax discipline, which was the aim, or the pretext, for the whole of this intrigue.

Their success was slight. Twenty-five bishops were expected; five only turned up—three apostates and two heretics. One of the heretics was the same Privatus of Lambesis, who, some years previously, had been deposed by a large council. At the same time, more than forty bishops arrived in Carthage for Cyprian's usual May

[1] Socrates, *H. E.* iv. 28; Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, at the end of the 6th century, saw a "passion" of Novatian—a fictitious composition of no value. The name of a martyr Novatian appears in the martyrology of St Jerome on June 29. I think it must be the same who had figured also on the 27th at the head of a list which has an African look. It seems very unlikely that the founder of the schism would have got into the calendars of the Church. The Roman calendar, which forms a part of the (pseudo) Hieronymian compilation, took its final form about 422 A.D., shortly after the last Novatian churches in Rome were closed.

Council, the second after the persecution. The Council met on May 15, 252. Privatus presented himself, and desired to plead his cause, and to be reinstated: but in vain.

In view of the persecution, which under the new Emperor Gallus was just breaking over the Church, the Council granted communion to the lapsed of all degrees, who had conscientiously done penance till then. This still further diminished the *raison d'être* of the opposition. But it did not affect the partisans of Felicissimus, who, for over a year, had been promoting a schism, and not doing penance.

They did not therefore relinquish their little opposition Council. They pronounced a sentence of deposition against Cyprian, and appointed, as his successor, Fortunatus, one of the five factious priests. Cyprian did not disturb himself. He had the whole African episcopate on his side, and the whole Christian population of Carthage, except a small body of intriguers, called, from the name of their chief, by the sobriquet of *Infelicissimi*.

Felicissimus set out for Rome with some of his party; they did their utmost to get their new bishop, Fortunatus, recognized. Pope Cornelius banished them from the Church; but, as they made a great commotion, and threatened to publish letters of Fortunatus, full of infamous calumnies against Cyprian, Cornelius took fright, and consented to read the documents they submitted. This concession, the reason for which escapes us, annoyed Cyprian considerably, and he was not a man to be put out without cause.[1]

This was the second cloud to arise between two great bishops, whose connection is famous.[2] At the beginning of his episcopate, Cornelius had been hurt by Cyprian's delay in announcing his consecration, and by the steps he

[1] Ep. xlv., xlviii.

[2] Cornelius and Cyprian are commemorated together in Kalendar and Collect (September 16). See *Roman Breviary*, and Benson's *Cyprian*, pp. 610-620, for the complications about the calendars.—*Translator's Note.*

deemed necessary to verify it. Cyprian, in his turn, was much surprised by the timidity of his colleague, and by Cornelius' apparent readiness to lend his authority to the doubts cast on Cyprian's right to occupy the See of Carthage.

He frankly and eloquently remonstrated with Cornelius.[1] This was in the summer of 252. The persecution of Gallus, which was already impending, was soon to change the current of Cyprian's thoughts about the Bishop of Rome. As soon as he heard of his exile, he hastened to write a letter of congratulation.[2] This time, Cyprian himself was able to remain amongst his people, in spite of the fanatics in Carthage, who were perpetually clamouring for his death. The following year, Cornelius having died in exile, Lucius was elected bishop by the Church of Rome; he was also exiled, but for a short time only. Peace was restored, and Lucius returned to Rome. Cyprian, who had congratulated him upon his confession, wrote to associate himself and the African episcopate in the joy of the Roman Church.[3]

These letters, as indeed the whole correspondence of St Cyprian, testify to the close connection between the two Sees of Rome and Carthage, to their frequent intercourse, and to the special consideration in which the Africans held the Church of Rome, "the principal (*principalis*) Church, the source of sacerdotal unity."[4]

Under Pope Stephen, the successor of Lucius, these relations became less pleasant; for a time indeed, they were rather strained.

5. *The Baptismal Controversy*

Lucius died, March 5, 254. With Stephen, who succeeded him, Cyprian seems, from the first, to have been but little in sympathy. Ere long, they came into actual collision, and, at first, not over either Italian or African affairs.

During the persecution, the Spanish prelates, Basilides Bishop of Emerita (Merida), and Martial, Bishop of Legio

[1] Ep. lix. [2] Ep. lx. [3] Ep. lxi. [4] Ep. lix. 14.

and Asturica (Leon and Astorga) had either asked for, or accepted, a certificate of sacrifice. For this, and for various other misdeeds, they were deposed from the episcopate, and their successors, Sabinus and Felix, appointed. They did not submit. Basilides set out for Rome, succeeded in convincing Pope Stephen that the accusations were unfounded, and was restored to his position. Little pleased with this sudden change, the laity and the new bishops took the line of applying to the Council of Africa, which had become a regular institution. The letters of St Cyprian show that, except in times of persecution, it met at least once a year, in spring, and sometimes also in autumn. These great periodical assemblies did much for the maintenance and uniformity of discipline. Their fame spread beyond Africa, and the reputation of the wise and illustrious man, who was their very life and soul, added to their renown. It was in the autumn of 254 that the request of the Spaniards came before the Council. The Council, like the pope, heard only one side, and pronounced in its favour. Basilides and Martial were declared unworthy to be bishops. With the very imperfect information we have, it is hardly possible to decide which was in the right.[1] But certainly, the letter from the Council of Africa,[2] conveying to the churches of Emerita and Legio-Asturica the news of their decision contrary to that of Pope Stephen, was not calculated to please that prelate.

Shortly afterwards, Cyprian received, in quick succession, two letters from Faustinus, Bishop of Lyons, laying before him the facts as to the schismatic attitude of Marcian, Bishop of Arles. Marcian was in communion with Novatian; and he vigorously applied his puritan principles in the reconciliation of the lapsed. Faustinus and other bishops of Gaul had applied in vain to Pope Stephen to stop the scandal. In despair, they invoked the help of the Bishop of Carthage. Stephen seems to have treated the Novatianists with some leniency; the report

[1] The bishops of Spain differed; some recognized Basilides and Martial, and were, in consequence, severely taken to task by the African Council (*Ep.* lxvii. 3).

[2] *Ep.* lxvii.

was that, contrary to established custom, he allowed the schismatic priests or deacons, who returned to the Church, to retain their office.[1] Cyprian wrote to him in strong terms.

According to Cyprian,[2] it was the duty of the pope to intervene in Gaul, to write to the bishops of that country, and to the faithful laity in Arles, and advise that they should at once take steps to get rid of Marcian and elect his successor. The Bishop of Carthage seems here to take upon himself to champion a rule of discipline and the usages established by Cornelius and Lucius, and dropped by their successor, for whom the tone of his letter shows indeed but scant respect. Stephen, whether or not he deserved Cyprian's reproaches, could hardly have appreciated being so taken to task. At this crisis arose the controversy on the baptism of heretics.

On what terms could heretics, who abjured their schism, come over to the Catholic Church, and be admitted to communion? This question appears to have become very pressing towards the end of the 2nd century, when some of the sects, which abounded on all sides, were on the wane. Two kinds of cases came up for consideration. Either the converted heretic had been initiated into Christianity in the Church, or in the sect. If in the Church, his initiation was certainly valid, but he had committed a grave sin in leaving it, and the Church was within its rights in imposing upon him some penance analogous to that laid upon an ordinary sinner. This was done everywhere. But when it was a case of heretical initiation, the matter was very different. Could the Catholic Church recognize the validity of an initiation conferred by schismatics, who, although nominally Christians, were in revolt against Church authority, separated from communion with the faithful, and given over to false and tainted doctrines? Even admitting that their peculiar rites and formulas still retained the essential qualities of those of the Church, might they not be nullified by the different meaning attached to them? This most delicate question could not be settled off-hand,

[1] Ep. lxvii. [2] Ep. lxxii.

and varying solutions of the difficulty appeared, which, however, may be reduced to two. In some places no initiation but that of the orthodox Church was accepted. In Rome and in Egypt, a distinction gradually arose. Christian initiation had two parts—baptism, and what we call confirmation. By the first, came purification from sin; by the second, the gift of the Spirit. In the ritual of this second part, special importance was attached to the laying on of hands, accompanied by an invocation of the Sevenfold Spirit. The Roman usage was, to accept baptism conferred by heretics; but it was thought that only the Church, the True Church, could invoke the Holy Spirit with any efficacy; and therefore the converted heretic had to submit to the imposition of hands, as if by way of penance, but really that he might receive the Holy Spirit.

In Carthage, the absolute repudiation of the validity of the heretical rites, had the authority of long established tradition. Tertullian, in his treatise on baptism, expressly inculcates this repudiation. About 220, it was sanctioned by a great Council of the African and Numidian bishops, called together by Agrippinus. In Asia Minor, councils held at Iconium, at Synnada, and various other places, had ruled the same practice,[1] which obtained as well in Antioch and Northern Syria.[2] Palestine, in this, as in the matter of Paschal observance, followed the Alexandrian custom.[3]

Nevertheless, this rough outline must not be taken as quite accurate. Centralization was still so little the rule, that there were differences of usage, even in Africa. In 255,[4]

[1] Cyprian, Ep. lxxv. 7 (letter of Firmilian); Dionysius of Alexandria in Eusebius vii. 7.

[2] This is apparent from the *Didascalia* and the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

[3] The attitude of Eusebius in the matter leads to this conclusion. To him, "the ancient use" is that baptism is not repeated, but only imposition of hands; Cyprian's method seemed to him an innovation.

[4] Amongst Cyprian's letters, lxix.-lxxv. relate to this matter. Letter lxix. *ad Magnum*, however, does not touch the main question. Cyprian is considering the particular case of the Novatianists, whom he classes with other heretics, and he expounds his doctrine on clinical baptism.

the Council of Carthage was presented with a memorial, signed by eighteen Numidian bishops, who had doubts as to the legitimacy of the prevailing African custom. Perhaps they were troubled by the differences between the custom of their own Church and that of Rome. However that may be, the Council decreed that the African custom should prevail, as the only authorized practice. This was the answer given to the Numidian bishops, together with the grounds for this decision.[1]

Soon after, Cyprian himself wrote to Quintus, a Mauritanian bishop, in reply to similar inquiries.[2] In this letter, there is already a tone of special antagonism to Pope Stephen, although his name is not mentioned. At the next Council, in the autumn of 255, or the spring of 256, Cyprian thought the time had come to cut short all the African objections, and to clear up the indirect and smouldering controversy which divided his colleagues, by bringing matters to a direct issue. He wrote to Stephen[3] in his own name and that of the Council, and sent him, together with the letter of the preceding Council, his own letter to Quintus. He intended, not only to establish his right to observe the ancient custom of his own Church, but also to show that the practice of rebaptism was the only legitimate usage, and consequently to induce the Roman Church to adopt it also.

In addition to this matter of baptism, the Council of Carthage also dealt with the position of priests and deacons, who had either joined sects, or been ordained by them, and it condemned them to remain always in lay-communion. Had Stephen made any special concession on this point? We know not, but subsequently the discussion turned exclusively on the question of baptism.

Whilst the delegates from the Council were on their way to Rome, Cyprian, being consulted by one of his bishops, named Jubaïan, as to the importance of some criticisms which had reached him from Italy, replied to

[1] Ep. lxx. [2] Ep. lxxi. [3] Ep. lxxii.

him by a long exposition of his own position.[1] In the whole controversy, this letter is the most important document (*morceau théorique*) on the theory of the question.

The Romans, who, for over a year, had been perpetually taken to task by the African Council, gave its representatives rather a cold reception. The letter they bore was not very ingratiating. "We know," it ran, "that some persons will never relinquish the views they have adopted, nor easily change their minds; that, whilst they keep up peaceable relations with their fellows, they persist in their own ways. We do not wish either to terrorize over anyone, or to lay down the law for others. Each of the heads of the Church is free to conduct his administration as he sees fit, being only responsible to the Lord."[2] At this moment of tension, many regrettable words were said. Cyprian was called "a false Christ," "a false apostle," "a treacherous worker." The legates were not admitted to an audience with the pope; the Roman congregation was even forbidden to show them hospitality.[3]

Stephen replied to the claims of Cyprian by a very serious decision. Not only did he refuse to abandon his own practice, but he intimated to the bishops of Africa that they must conform to it also; otherwise he would have no further dealings with them. A similar ultimatum was despatched to the East.

Stephen's letter reached Carthage in the course of the summer. Whilst awaiting the next meeting of the Council, fixed for September 1, Cyprian wrote to Pompeius, Bishop of the Tripolitan province,[4] a letter which alludes to Stephen's reply, and complains of it bitterly. On the day appointed, eighty-seven bishops from all the

[1] Ep. lxxiii.

[2] It is not easy to reconcile this concession with the way in which Cyprian condemned the usage contrary to his own.

[3] Ep. lxxv. 25. Firmilian repeats here what was related to him by the deacon Rogatianus, who, having left Carthage immediately after the Council of September 1, 256, could only have known what took place in Rome before the Council met.

[4] Ep. lxxiv.

African provinces assembled in Carthage under Cyprian's presidency.[1] The correspondence between Cyprian and Jubaïan was read. And then the president called on each member of the assembly to pronounce his opinion: "In doing this," said he, "we judge no one, nor do we propose to put out of communion those who think otherwise. None of us wishes to pose as a Bishop of bishops, or to force the agreement of his fellows by a tyrannous terror. Every bishop, in the fulness of his liberty and authority, retains the right to think for himself;[2] he is no more amenable to the judgment of another, than he is at liberty to judge others."

One after the other, the eighty-seven bishops recorded their vote against the validity of heretical baptism. Of Stephen and his letter no mention was made.

The African Church thus assumed an attitude of passive resistance. It did not deny the necessity for doctrinal conformity with the First of Churches, the principal (*principalis*) Church, of which the Pope was the Head and the representative. It did not even controvert the special and superior authority which pertained to him, in virtue of the locality of his See, and of his succession to St Peter. But the African Church believed that this authority had been abused by the effort to impose upon others an unauthorized practice. It did not go so far, in support of that view, as to break off, on its own account, from relations with Rome, but it was satisfied to make a solemn declaration of its decision. After the Council's manifesto, Stephen, if he carried out his threats, would have to abstain from sending any clergy, or messengers, to Carthage; perhaps, if the clergy, or any of the African congregation, went to Rome, they would no longer be allowed to participate in the liturgical ceremonies, or in the alms of the Church. The African

[1] The *procès verbal* of this Council is preserved. It is the most ancient document of the kind. The bishops say they are assembled *ex provincia Africa Numidia Mauritania.*

[2] Such, no doubt, was the belief also of Privatus of Lambesis, but that did not prevent his deposition by the Council of Africa.

churches, on the contrary, would have to continue their welcome to Romans travelling in Africa, and even to correspond with the clergy of Rome, so far as they might feel inclined to, knowing that their letters ran a great risk of not being read.

If this situation had lasted, it would soon have become intolerable. At the moment of the Council, they did not perhaps fully realise all the complications which might arise. But however this may be, they at once tried to open up relations with the churches of Asia Minor and the East, thinking thus to give more weight to their manifesto, and also to confirm themselves in their resistance, by the example of others. These churches, as they also re-baptised heretics, were equally involved in the controversy with the pope. A deacon, Rogatianus, set sail for the coast of Cilicia, and went on into Cappadocia, to Firmilian, the celebrated Bishop of Cæsarea. He, with all his brother-bishops of Eastern Asia Minor, shared Cyprian's views on the baptismal question. Like Cyprian, Firmilian was renowned for virtue, learning, experience, and zeal. The letter he entrusted to Rogatianus,[1] and with which the deacon hurried back to Carthage, referred to Pope Stephen in very harsh terms, without, however, disputing his authority, any more than did the African documents.

And thus the winter passed—a sort of blockade continuing between Rome and the churches of Africa and the East. Spring returned, and Easter, without, so far as we know, any modification of this unhappy position.

But Stephen's death, on August 2 of this year (257), relieved the tension. His successors, though they still retained the custom of the Roman Church, and tried to push it as much as possible elsewhere, saw no necessity for extreme harshness towards those who differed. Dionysius of Alexandria, the Irenæus of this new Victor, though in his diocese he observed the same practice as Stephen, was not at all disposed to follow his severity, nor, for a divergence of this kind, was he inclined to pay

[1] Ep. lxxv.

any heed to an excommunication involving half the Church. He had already written, in that sense, to Stephen himself,[1] and to two learned priests of Rome, Dionysius and Philemon, who naturally agreed with their Bishop. After the death of Stephen, the new Pope Xystus II. and his colleagues made it clear that the Roman *presbyterium* had modified its attitude. Dionysius of Alexandria, in writing to them, does not disguise his feelings as to the extreme gravity of the attempt made by the deceased pope, or as to the importance of keeping the peace, and of respecting the decisions of weighty and important councils.[2]

These words helped to strengthen the unity, already restored by the mere fact of the change of popes. Xystus and Cyprian re-established the relations between Rome and Africa,[3] which Stephen had broken off. Correspondence with Firmilian was also resumed.

Dionysius, the successor of Xystus, came to the assistance of the Cappadocian Church in its distress after the invasion of the Persians in 259. And, with the Roman alms, he sent a message of peace.[4] Happy days! when charity was so fervent, and resentment so short-lived.

Nevertheless, unity was not restored at the expense of the practice Pope Stephen condemned. In the 4th century, St Basil still adhered to the same practices as Firmilian; and so it was in Syria. The Africans also adhered to their own custom, and did not give it up, until the Council of Arles, in 314, under the Emperor Constantine.

The news of the death of Stephen had hardly reached Carthage, when fresh persecution broke out. On August 30, 257, Cyprian was arrested by order of the pro-consul, and ordered to confine himself at Curubis. A year later, September 13, 258, they came to fetch him for a second hearing. The interview with the pro-consul took place the next day. The pro-consul said: "Thou art

[1] Eusebius vii. 2, 5.

[2] Eusebius vii. 5-9.

[3] Pontius, *Life of St Cyprian*, ch. xiv.: "Jam de Xysto, bono et *pacifico* sacerdote ac propterea beatissimo martyre nuntios acceperat."

[4] St Basil, *Ep.* lxx.

Thascius Cyprianus?" "I am," replied the bishop. "Thou art the pope of persons of sacrilegious views?"[1] "I am." "The holy emperors command thee to perform the rite." "I will not do so." "Consider thyself." "Do what thou art charged to do; the matter is so clear, there is nothing to consider."

The pro-consul, who had not often had such a man to try, nevertheless conferred with his council. Then, in a reluctant voice, he summed up the indictment of the State against the Christian Pontiff, and finally read from his tablets: "Thascius Cyprianus is to be executed by the sword."

The Christians of Carthage, who had collected the night before, flocked in crowds around the tribunal. They accompanied their bishop to the place of martyrdom, where Cyprian died, as he had lived—simply and nobly. And in spite of circumstances, his faithful people gave him a triumphant burial.[2]

Between the persecutions of Valerian and of Diocletian, that is, roughly, during the last forty years of the 3rd century, the history of the Church in the West is entirely lost to sight. Through Eusebius, and also from a Roman chronicle, we know the succession of the popes during that time, and the length of the episcopate of each. Dionysius, the successor of Xystus II., has left his mark on the history of Oriental controversies; but we know nothing of his doings in Rome or in the Latin country. This is even more absolutely the case in regard to his successors, Felix, Eutychian, and Gaius, for even the Eastern documents pass them over in silence. Of two successors of St Cyprian, Carpophorus and Lucian,[3] the names are known, but nothing more. A few names of bishops may be picked out here and there, in the official lists of other churches.

But nowhere else do we hear anything of the rest of

[1] *Tu papam te sacrilegae mentis hominibus praebuisti?*

[2] The *Acta Pro-consularia* of St Cyprian is amongst the best records of martyrdom extant.

[3] Optat, *De Schism, Donatistarum*, i. 19.

Africa or of Italy, the Illyrian or Danubian provinces, or of Gaul, Britain, or Spain. In Spain, however, just before the last persecution, about 300 A.D., a council was held, the decrees of which give us a glimpse of the situation, and the institutions of the Church at that time: to this we shall return later.

CHAPTER XXI

CHRISTIANITY IN THE EAST, BEFORE DECIUS

Upper Asia Minor and its Hellenization. Apostolic Evangelization. The Churches of Bithynia, Pontus, and Cappadocia. Alexander and Firmilian, Bishops of Cæsarea. Gregory Thaumaturgus. Antioch after Ignatius. The Bishops Theophilus and Serapion. Edessa and its Christian kings. Bardesanes. Southern Syria. The Churches of Cæsarea in Palestine, and Jerusalem. Julius Africanus. Beryllus, Bishop of Bostra.

1. *Upper Asia Minor*

BESIDES the province of Asia, on the Ægean, Asia Minor further included—on the north, Bithynia, and the high lands of Pontus, which stretched along the coast of the Black Sea, as far as the mountainous region of Armenia; on the south, Lycia, Pamphylia, Upper and Lower Cilicia, with their winding coast of alternating plains and mountains, bordering the sea of Cyprus; and in the interior, round the central steppes with their great salt lake, Galatia and Cappadocia, the latter being dominated by the lonely summit of Mount Argeas, and the mountain ranges of the Taurus and the Anti-Taurus.

When the history of Christianity begins, most of these countries were little, if at all, Hellenized. Long before Alexander, the great Greek towns had established counting-houses on the sea-coast, and notably on the Euxine. After the Macedonian conquest, these settlements developed, and other towns gradually grew up in the interior. Thence, Hellenism spread, without difficulty, to the still barbarous provinces of Pontus, Cappadocia,

and to the little Celtic state, which, in the 3rd century B.C., had been founded between Phrygia and Pontus by bands of Gaulish adventurers. But it took some time for these people who were still barbarians, or whose civilization differed from that of Greece and Rome, to alter their manners, religions, institutions, and dialects. In St Jerome's time Celtic was still spoken in the neighbourhood of Ancyra, as in the country round Treves; and, when Christianity supplanted them, the gods of the old sanctuaries of Pontus and Cappadocia had not lost their outlandish aspect. The Cappadocians had no literature until the 4th century.

When the Romans had mastered this country they, at first, left a great part of it under the native princes; only by slow degrees was the whole of Asia Minor brought under the provincial system. From the time of Trajan, there were five provinces; in the north, Bithynia-Pontus; in the south, Lycia-with-Pamphylia, and Cilicia; in the interior, Galatia and Cappadocia.

This position, however, was far from being attained when, about 45 A.D., St Paul began to convert the Jewish and even the pagan population in Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. During his later journeys, he may possibly have founded communities in Galatia proper.[1] The first Epistle of St Peter indicates a wider evangelization; it is addressed to the elect "scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Half a century later, Christians were very numerous in the province of Bithynia-Pontus, which then extended even beyond the Halys, and included the important port of Amisus (Samsun). From this town Pliny, the governor of the province, addressed the famous report to the Emperor Trajan, in which he

[1] Pisidia and Lycaonia then formed part of the province of Galatia. It is not certain that the "Galatians," to whom the celebrated Epistle was addressed, were true Galatians, inhabitants of the ancient Celtic territory. There is no reason why the name should not simply refer to the Christian communities founded by St Paul in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, during his first missionary journey.

complains that the Christian missions had invaded not only the towns, but the villages and country districts, creating a desert round the temples and reducing the value of sacrificial victims. At this time Marcion was spending his early youth at Sinope, with the bishop his father. Under Marcus Aurelius, the false prophet Alexander inaugurated the worship of Glycon, the serpent-god, in the town of Abonoticus (Ineboli); and in spite of Lucian and his pamphlets, his imposture met with prodigious success. From what the satirist says, it is clear that Christians were very numerous in this district of Pontus. Alexander much dreaded them, and coupled them with the Epicureans, in his curses on the unbelieving.

Dionysius of Corinth wrote to the congregation of Nicomedia, who, like others, were troubled by the spread of Marcionism. He also answered two Christians of Amastris, Bacchylides, and Elpistus, who had consulted him. His letter was addressed "to the Church of Amastris, and the churches of Pontus."[1] In it he treats of practical questions, such as marriage, chastity, and the reconciliation of sinners and heretics. In this letter, Bishop Palmas of Amastris is mentioned by name. We come across him again, about 190. When the bishops of Pontus wrote to Pope Victor on the Paschal question, the name of Palmas of Amastris, as the oldest,[2] appears first.

We have seen already in the history of Alexander of Abonoticus how easily, in these little civilized countries,

[1] Τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ παροικούσῃ Ἀμαστριν ἅμα ταῖς κατὰ Πόντον. Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 23.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 23. At that time, as we learn from Ptolemy, a considerable part of Pontus had been separated from the province of Bithynia-Pontus, and attached to that of Galatia. Amastris was the most easterly town of Bithynia-Pontus in the province of the same name. For the purposes of the worship of Rome and Augustus, the towns of this province were then divided into two groups; the one for the Bithynian division had its centre at Nicomedia, the other for the Pontus division at Amastris. Nicomedia became a Metropolitan See; Amastris did not. It is a mistake to infer (Harnack, *Die Mission*, p. 473) from the above passage of Eusebius that Amastris held that position in the 2nd century. Palmas took precedence not by virtue of his See, but by seniority, either of age or consecration.

simple minds were shaken and carried away by religious extravagances. And Montanism found there a ready welcome. For a moment, the Church of Ancyra hesitated. The bishops themselves saw visions and rivalled the prophets. We hear of one,[1] who having often prophesied before his people, finally warned them to expect the "day of the Lord" within a year. The poor souls believed him, gave up their work, sold their possessions, and ceased to give their daughters in marriage. We can imagine the confusion when the allotted term passed without bringing the Last Judgment.

A little later, amidst the terror produced by earthquakes and persecutions, a native prophetess appeared in Cappadocia, declaring that these convulsions were a divine intimation that they must forthwith leave Cappadocia, henceforth an accursed land, and migrate in a body to Jerusalem. The mission of effecting this exodus was committed to her, with power to convince the doubting by fresh earthquakes. These absurdities were widely believed; caravans set off in the middle of winter; the prophetess marching at their head bare-footed, followed by her adherents, a priest and a deacon of Cæsarea among them. But it was the prophetess who held services, baptized, and celebrated the Eucharist. A courageous exorcist at last faced this rival of Maximilla, and unlike the Phrygian bishops, succeeded in showing up the imposture.

These Christian communities, like those of Asia proper, suffered much both from the application of the laws prohibiting Christianity, and from local persecutions. Few details have come down to us. Tertullian, however, mentions[2] a legate of Cappadocia, L. Claudius Herminianus, whose wife was converted, and who revenged himself by treating the Christians most harshly. Attacked by a contagious disease, and abandoned by his people: "Let us hide this," he said, "lest the Christians triumph." As his illness increased, he was stricken with remorse;

[1] Hippolytus, *in Danielem*, p. 232, Bonwetsch. We are not told of what place he was bishop; Hippolytus only says that the thing happened in Pontus.

[2] *Ad Scap.* 3.

and regretting the apostasies his severity had extorted, he died almost a Christian. This legate probably lived in the time of Severus. In the reign of Maximinus the extreme harshness of another legate, Serenianus, forced many Christians to leave Cappadocia.[1] The exodus led by the prophetess, took place in his time.

There were but few towns in these districts. The most important, Cæsarea in Cappadocia, was the headquarters of the army which guarded both Armenia and the passes of the Caucasus. Under its early kings, it bore the name of Mazaca, and was an insignificant place, but gradually it became one of the largest towns in the empire. It does not come into Christian history, till about 200 A.D. It had then as bishop, Alexander, a learned man. He was trained in the school of Alexandria, by Pantænus and Clement. Under Septimius Severus, he suffered a long imprisonment; and Clement, driven from Alexandria by persecution, replaced him very efficiently. Eventually, Alexander was released; but apparently it was not expedient for him to remain in Cæsarea.[2] He removed to Palestine, and, as we shall see later, settled finally at Jerusalem.

In the next generation, the See of Cæsarea was held by Firmilian, a man of high birth, and like his predecessor a great friend of the Alexandrian theologian. In 232, when Origen was obliged to leave Alexandria and came to live in Palestine, Firmilian was already bishop, and invited him to remain in Cappadocia, "for the good of the churches." There is reason to believe that Origen did indeed make a stay of some length in Cæsarea, during the persecution under Maximin.[3] Firmilian met him also in Palestine. About this time, two young men from

[1] Firmilian, in *Cypr.*, Ep. lxxv. 10.

[2] Eusebius says that he went to Jerusalem to pray and visit the Holy Places. This explanation is surely insufficient. Alexander, after the persecution, would have something besides pilgrimages to occupy his time. His ready consent to stay in Jerusalem as bishop, seems to show that it was impossible for him to return to Cappadocia.

[3] Eusebius vi. 27; St Jerome, *De viris*, 54; Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 147 (64, Butler's edition).

Pontus, brothers, Theodore and Athenodorus, scions of one of the most illustrious families of their land, influenced by Firmilian, but still more it seems by Origen, joined the Christian community. Being highly educated and good Latin scholars, they had proposed to study Roman law at the celebrated school of jurisprudence at Berytus; but their brother-in-law being nominated as assessor to the governor of Palestine, they followed their sister to her new home. There they met Origen, to whom, no doubt, Firmilian made them known. He succeeded in interesting them in philosophical studies, and soon completed their conversion. For five years (*c.* 240) they sat at his feet, and then they returned to Pontus. Theodore, however, who was also called Gregory, expressed his gratitude to his illustrious master before he left, in a public panegyric pronounced in his presence; we still have the text of it. The private and municipal business which had recalled him to his native land was not allowed to prevent him fostering his spiritual life, in retirement. He remained in close correspondence with Origen,[1] and lived thus, till the Bishop of Amasia, Phædimus, entrusted him with the mission in Neo-Cæsarea. Amasia was a town of some importance in a district of Pontus, called Pontus-Galaticus. In Neo-Cæsarea, which lay much more to the east, in Pontus-Polemoniacus,[2] there were but few Christians. Athenodorus,[3] the brother of Gregory, also became a missionary bishop. In these remote regions, everything had still to be done, and Gregory laid himself out to evangelize in town and country; and, high-bred scholar though he was, he knew how to put himself in touch with the humblest peasant. He disturbed their old religious customs as little as possible, allowing them to retain their festivals,

[1] We have a letter from Origen to Gregory in chap. xiii. of the Philocalia.

[2] Pontus Galaticus and Pontus Polemoniacus formed part of the province of Cappadocia in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

[3] In the next century, it was said that Gregory found only seventeen Christians in Neo-Cæsarea, and left there at his death only seventeen pagans.

processions, and sacred feasts, and contenting himself with directing these festivities to the honour of God, and the martyrs. The people of Comana, a town near Neo-Cæsarea, wishing for a bishop of their own, appealed to Gregory, who consecrated their first pastor, Alexander.[1]

The unusual amount of detail we have here, throws some faint light on the intellectual conditions in Eastern Asia Minor, and on the progress of the Gospel there. The organized churches were fairly numerous, and soon felt the need of drawing together. From the end of the 2nd century, meetings of bishops or councils were frequent in Greece and in Asia. By the 3rd century, this custom had extended to Cappadocia and the neighbouring districts; councils were held every year, for which the most serious questions were reserved, especially those of penitential discipline. Any unusual events gave rise to larger gatherings. Thus, early in the episcopate of Firmilian, a great council was held at Iconium. In which the bishops of Cappadocia, Galatia, Cilicia, and of other provinces as well, took part, and it was there that the rebaptism of converted heretics was decided on. Another council, held about the same time at Synnada, in Eastern Phrygia, arrived at the same decision.[2]

The Decian persecution broke over these countries as it did over the whole empire. We have few details except that, like Cyprian of Carthage, Gregory, evaded arrest by flight, with part of his flock. More serious was the suffering caused by the invasion of the barbarians, Boradi[3] and Goths, who, after the defeat of Decius (251) devastated the defenceless country. The invaders, masters of the lower Danube, crossed the straits into Asia Minor, and spread as far as Ephesus and Cappadocia. Other barbarians arriving by sea, seized Trebizond and devastated the surrounding country. When they departed, they left ruin behind them, and also innumerable cases of conscience

[1] St Alexander, the charcoal-burner.

[2] See p. 306 of this volume.

[3] The Βοράδες of Gregory (*Ep. can.* 5) are no doubt identical with the Βορανοί of Zosimus, *Hist. nova.* i. 27, 31, 34.

with which St Gregory had to deal.[1] The Christians from Pontus, whom the Goths took captive and then released, were vexed with scruples at having eaten heathen food. Gregory did not make much of this, especially as they assured him the barbarians had not sacrificed to idols, and the meals could therefore have had no religious character. Respectable women had been violated; Gregory consoled and reassured them as best he could. Others who had got into trouble, without awaiting the barbarians, he treated with more severity. More than one Christian had made up for his losses by helping himself to stolen goods, and even to captives from the train of the Goths; Gregory opines that such folk were enough to draw down fire from heaven on the land. But there were worse things still; some of the Christians had made common cause with the barbarians, shown them the way, the houses which were worth pillaging, and even enrolled themselves among them, and shared their evil deeds, forgetting, as the patriotic bishop said, that they were Pontians and Christians.

These unedifying details make us suspect that the conversions, so rapidly made by Gregory, were not as yet very thorough.

The life of the saintly bishop left a deep impression. His miracles are famous, and secured for him the titles of the Great, and Thaumaturgus (Wonder-worker). The Church of Neo-Cæsarea had still, in the 4th century, a creed derived from him; St John the Evangelist had revealed it to him, by request of Mary, the Mother of the Lord. This is, at least, the tradition handed down by Gregory of Nyssa, the panegyrist of Gregory Thaumaturgus. To judge by internal evidence only, the Creed of Neo-Cæsarea suggests rather the inspiration of Origen. It seems evident, that in spite of his miracles and his pastoral labours, Gregory always lived up to the philosophical education he had received from the great Alexandrian. Various writings credibly attributed to him,

[1] See the letter containing his celebrated canons, one of the most ancient treatises on casuistry.

besides those already mentioned, bear witness to his speculative tendencies.[1]

2. *Antioch.*

Syria, from the beginning of the 2nd century, was divided into three provinces: Syria proper, in the north; Syria Palestina, the former kingdom of Herod; and to the east and the south of the latter, Arabia, which corresponded to the kingdom of the Nabathæi. It was annexed to the empire in 105, and included Bostra and Petra, as well as the peninsula of Sinai.

Antioch, the ancient capital of the Seleucidæ, was the chief town of the north, and the headquarters of the army of the East, and it continued to be virtually the metropolis of the whole district. It was a town of great size. In population (700,000 inhabitants) and commercial importance, it was scarcely inferior to Alexandria. From the military point of view, it surpassed it. Its Hellenism was more homogeneous and more organised. It enjoyed municipal independence. Athens had its memories. Tarsus retained its celebrated schools. But Antioch was, in fact, the greatest of Greek towns, where the Greek spirit, in spite of the solvent influence of its oriental surroundings,

[1] St Gregory Thaumaturgus certainly wrote: 1st. The Panegyric of Origen; 2nd. The Epistle, containing the Canons, addressed to a ἱερώτατος πάπας, no doubt some neighbouring bishop, who had consulted him; 3rd. The Creed; 4th. The Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes. Of more doubtful authenticity are the treatises addressed to Theopompus, On the impassibility or passibility of God, To Tatian, On the Soul, and To Philagrius or Evagrius, on Consubstantiality. The first of these exists only in Syriac (Ryssel, *Greg. Thaum*, 1880, p. 73, German version); the third appears among the works of Saints Gregory Nazianzen and Gregory of Nyssa (*P. G.*, vol. xxxvii., p. 383, vol. xlvi., p. 1101). The other writings which bear his name are apocryphal, notably the Κατὰ μέρος πίστις, which is the work of an Apollinarian. For his biography apart from his works, see Eusebius vi. 30; vii. 14, 28, 30. His panegyric by St Gregory of Nyssa, and the few details furnished by St Basil, represent traditions collected about a century after the death of the saint in Pontus, either by the authors themselves or by their grandmother Macrina, who was living in Pontus soon after the death of Gregory, and may have seen him.

still retained its ascendancy. Its inhabitants were a captious people, no favourites with the emperors, whose generals they corrupted, and were apt to transform into rivals. Avidius Cassius reigned there in the days of Marcus Aurelius, and so did Pescennius Niger, the rival of Septimius Severus. The victory of Severus was followed up by harsh reprisals. The province of Syria was dismembered; Phœnicia was detached from it to form a fourth province; an attempt was even made to abolish the municipality of Antioch, and to subordinate this great city to Laodicea. But this freak could not last. It was no use; Antioch was still situated precisely where the Euphrates comes nearest to the Mediterranean, and was consequently the natural centre of defence for the Eastern frontier. It soon recovered all its privileges, and continued to be the Queen of the East. Its prestige did not diminish until the time of Julian.

We have already seen that Antioch succeeded Jerusalem as the chief metropolis of Christendom. Its bishops, in the generation after the apostles, were Euodius and Ignatius, the celebrated martyr. The heretics Menander and Saturninus were then there sowing the tares of Gnosticism. From Hadrian's time the Church of Antioch is entirely lost to sight. In the list of its bishops, given to Eusebius by Julius Africanus, are the unknown names of Hero, Cornelius, and Heros. Then comes Theophilus, who apparently held the See, during the last years of Marcus Aurelius, and under Commodus. We know Theophilus by his works, though only a treatise in three books is extant. It is an apology for Christianity, in answer to pagan objectors addressed to a certain Autolycus.[1] Previously he had written against the heresies of Marcion and Hermogenes. The latter was a painter, a dabbler in

[1] As he quotes (iii. 27) a book of Chryseros, in which the death of Marcus Aurelius is recorded (180), Theophilus must have written during the reign of Commodus in 181 at the earliest. On the other works of Theophilus, see Eusebius iv. 24 and St Jerome, *De Viris*, 25. Besides the works known to Eusebius, St Jerome mentions with a shade of doubt, a commentary on the book of Proverbs, and a sort of harmony of the gospels, like Tatian's Diatessaron.

philosophy, still half pagan, and against him Tertullian also wrote his book *Adversus Hermogenem.* Considering Tertullian's usual methods of composition, it is probable that he incorporated most of Theophilus' book, seasoning it with additional invectives of his own.[1] The writings of the Bishop of Antioch were highly thought of, and before long were studied in the West. Irenæus and Hippolytus made use of them before Tertullian. Theophilus also published several small catechetical works. Such literary activity befitted the bishop of the great metropolis of the East. The clergy of Antioch were always highly cultivated men; and in such surroundings the catechetical instruction must have developed as it did in Alexandria. In his treatise addressed to Autolycus, Theophilus quotes[2] an earlier work, περὶ ἱστοριῶν, which seems to have been a sort of chronicle of the history of the world from the beginning. He was therefore the first to attempt this kind of composition, taken up forty or fifty years later by Julius Africanus and Hippolytus.

After him, the Church of Antioch was ruled by Maximinus, of whom we know absolutely nothing, and then by the better known Serapion.[3] His episcopate corresponds, more or less, with the reign of Septimius Severus. It was in his time that Pescennius Niger was vanquished, and Antioch so harshly treated. Serapion took part in the Montanist controversy, and in this connection he wrote his letter to Pontius and Caricus. It formed part of a collection of letters like those of Ignatius and Dionysius of Corinth. Eusebius, who had these letters before him,[4] gives a curious extract from an epistle addressed to the Church of Rhossus in Cilicia, on the Syrian coast of the Gulf of Issus. In speaking of the Gospel of Peter, Serapion says:—

"We, my brothers, receive as Christ Himself, both Peter and the other apostles; but as to the works which

[1] In it the Apocalypse (22, 34) is quoted, as it was, Eusebius tells us, by Theophilus, and the Word is called Sophia, as in the books to Autolycus, etc.

[2] ii. 28, 30, 31; iii. 19.

[3] See above, p. 201.

[4] Eusebius vi. 12.

have been falsely attributed to them, experience teaches us to reject these, for we know that they have not been handed down to us by tradition. When I was with you, I imagined that you were all steadfast in the faith; therefore, without examining the so-called Gospel of Peter, which[1] they showed me, I said that, if being forbidden to read it was the only cause for your perturbation, it might be read. But now I learn that these people have made my words an excuse for adopting heretical views; therefore I shall make a point of coming to you soon. Wait for me, therefore."

We learn from this account and from what follows, that the heretics, of whom the most prominent was a certain Marcianus, had begun by introducing into Rhossus the apocryphal gospel in question, and that when once it was allowed to be read in public, with consent of the Bishop of Antioch, they used it to support their doctrines. Serapion, in order to get to the bottom of the matter, wished to read the Gospel of Peter,[2] and was obliged to borrow a copy from the Docetæ. St Ignatius had already refuted these heretics, who may have had some connection with the sects of Saturninus and Marcion. Docetism was always very popular in Antioch.[3] Serapion's study of the book convinced him that the Gospel of Peter was, on the whole, orthodox, but contained strange ideas, inspired by Docetism. This is exactly the impression we receive from the fragment of this gospel quite recently restored to light[4] by the Egyptian papyri.

[1] Here, and in the following phrase, Serapion is speaking of a group of persons, whom he must have mentioned in the missing beginning of his letter.

[2] It would perhaps have been better had he done this before allowing it to be read.

[3] In the 4th century, the dialogue of Adamantius and the interpolated edition of St Ignatius' Epistles take a strong line against this heresy.

[4] First published (1892) by M. Bouriant, in vol. ix., fasc. 1, of the *Memoires* of the French Archæological Mission to Cairo, *cf.* Harnack, *Texte und Unt.*, vol. ix. Origen (*in Matt.* x. 17) also mentions the Gospel of Peter, where the brothers of Jesus were said to be sons of Joseph, by a former wife. Bouriant's fragment represents the end of the gospel—the history of the Passion and the Resurrection.

The Church of Antioch elected as successor to Serapion, who died about 211, a confessor named Asclepiades. Bishop Alexander of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, an imprisoned confessor, sent from his dungeon by the hand of Clement of Alexandria,[1] a letter to the Church in Antioch, highly eulogizing the new bishop. This is all we know of Asclepiades; we have no details on his episcopate or those of his successors, Philetus and Zebinus.[2] After them came Babylas, who was bishop until the Decian persecution,[3] and has been mentioned in that connection.

3. *Edessa.*

Towards the end of the 2nd century B.C., the town of Edessa, situated beyond the Euphrates, in Upper Mesopotamia, became the capital of a small kingdom, independent of the Seleucidæ, and governed by a native dynasty. Nearly all these princes were called Abgar or Manu. Alternately under the influence of Parthia and that of Rome, but tending to be drawn in the Roman direction, they preserved their independence down to the 3rd century. The organization of a province of Mesopotamia, by Severus, with its capital at Nisibis, divided them from the Parthian kingdom and prepared the way for annexation with Rome.

This little kingdom of Osroëne was, notwithstanding the Macedonian name of its capital, untouched by Hellenism. The language was Syrian, and Jews were very numerous. In Gospel days, Izates, King of Adiabene (ancient Assyria), and his mother Helen, embraced Judaism. Early in the 2nd century, a political change brought to the throne of Edessa a branch of the Abgar dynasty, connected with the house of Izates. Two or three generations later, Abgar IX., Bar-Manu (179-214), was converted to Christianity; his son, Manu, who

[1] Eusebius vi. 11.

[2] St Jerome (*De Viris*, 64: cf. *Chronologie*, *Ol.* 251, 4) speaks of a priest of Antioch called Geminus, who must have lived under Bishop Zebinus, and who left literary remains.

[3] See above, p. 269, also p. 336.

succeeded him, was also a Christian. Julius Africanus was on friendly terms with these princes. The reign of Manu was short. Caracalla (216) dethroned him, and sent him a prisoner to Rome. But this did not end the kingdom of Osroëne, for in the time of Gordian III. the dynasty of Abgar still survived.

The conversion of their king had naturally considerable influence on the spread of Christianity in these countries beyond the Euphrates. There were several bishops in Osroëne, even at the time of the Paschal controversy (*c.* 190).[1] The Christian Church in Edessa was a very prominent building; its destruction by an inundation (201) is mentioned in the description of the catastrophe by the local chronicle.[2]

The religion which preceded Christianity was one of those cults so common in the East, in which the divinity had both a male and a female form. We get an idea of it from Lucian's description[3] of the temple of Mabog or Hierapolis. One of its usages was that of religious mutilation: this Abgar, after his conversion, strictly forbade.

In Edessa, as in many other places, legend has usurped the place of the early history of Christianity. This began early, for by the end of the 3rd century, documents,[4] said to be derived from the archives of the kingdom, were in circulation, attributing the king's conversion to the Saviour Himself. Abgar, being ill, is told of the miracles of Jesus; he writes and invites Him to Edessa. Jesus cannot come Himself, but prophesies that Edessa should never fall into the hands of enemies, and promises to send some one in his stead to the King. So after the Passion, the Apostle Thomas sends a disciple called Addai (Addeus or Thaddeus), who converts the King, and baptizes and heals him. The whole kingdom becomes Christian. The

[1] Eusebius v. 23; *cf.* see above, p. 211.

[2] Ed. Hallier, *Texte und Unt.*, vol. ix. 1, p. 86.

[3] *De Dea Syria.*

[4] Lipsius, *Die Edessenische Abgarsage* (1880); Tixeront, *Les Origines de l'Eglise d'Edesse* (1888).

first bishops of Edessa were Addai himself, and then his two disciples and fellow-workers, Aggar and Palout. Under the episcopate of Aggai, a change of sovereigns leads to a persecution. Aggai is killed. Palout, his successor, having no one to consecrate him, goes to ask consecration from Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, who had himself been consecrated by Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome.

It is unnecessary to point out the historical and chronological difficulties which abound in this account. The central fact of the conversion of the kingdom has been put back to apostolic days, together with various people and circumstances, really belonging to the end of the 2nd century. The Apostle Thomas was said from the time of Origen[1] to have preached the Gospel to the Parthians. In the 4th century his tomb was believed to be at Edessa, and this belief took shape in a basilica, a great resort of pilgrims.

But the great celebrity of Edessa, in the time of its Christian kings, was Bardesanes. Born in 154 A.D.,[2] he lived in close intimacy with the Edessa princes, and unless Julius Africanus[3] has confounded him with another man of the same name, he was like them, a mighty hunter. All that we know[4] of his literary productions, reveals a philosopher, brilliant and occasionally sound, versed in out-of-the-way learning, and a charming poet. His belief passed through many strange phases. Like many other men of ability, the theory of the æons fascinated him for a time. Even when he settled down in a more orthodox faith, he still retained traces of his previous Gnosticism. He was an opponent of Marcionism, which a certain Prepon had spread beyond the Euphrates, and he also

[1] Eusebius iii. 1 ; cf. *Recogn. Clem.* ix. 29 ; see chap. xxv. for what is there said of the *Acta Thomae.*

[2] The date is recorded in the Chronicle of Edessa, which even gives the day, July 11 (ed. quoted, p. 90).

[3] Κεστοί, in Thevenot, *Mathem. veteres*, p. 275.

[4] For Bardesanes, see *Philosoph.* vi. 35 ; vii. 31 ; Eusebius iv. 30 ; Epiph., *Haer.* 56, and the hymns of St Ephrem, especially 1-6 and 50-56.

combated the Valentinian "Pleroma" and other heresies of the time. His works, if we only had more than the merest fragments, would be the oldest representatives of Syriac literature. Of the hundred and fifty hymns attributed to him, only a few scraps have come down to us in the sacred songs which St Ephrem wrote to rival them. It is very doubtful whether his name should be connected with a Syriac apology, addressed to Septimius Severus, and wrongly attributed to Melito.[1] The book entitled *The Book of the Laws of Countries*, a dialogue in which Bardesanes takes part, is certainly not his, but the work of a disciple. It was perhaps not even originally written in Syriac. But the questions of Fate and of astral influence there treated, had been discussed by Bardesanes himself,[2] in a treatise on "Fate" (περὶ εἱμαρμένης), written in opposition to Avidas the astrologer, and addressed to a certain Antoninus.[3]

Bardesanes frequently expressed his ideas in dialogue form. He was both the Plato and the Pindar of Aramaic literature.[4] He is accused by those who have read his writings, of astrological and Docetic tendencies.

But Bardesanes just escaped martyrdom. Epiphanius relates that Apollonius, the companion—that is, no doubt, the official representative of Antoninus Caracalla—summoned him to renounce Christianity, and that he refused. This may have been in connection with the political changes, in the principality of Edessa, when Caracalla dethroned King Manu, and incorporated the state in the Roman province. Bardesanes' relations with the fallen sovereign necessarily involved him in difficulties, under the

[1] Otto, *Corpus Apol.*, vol. ix. 423.

[2] Cureton, *Spic. Syriacum;* French translation in Nau, *Bardesane l'astrologue, le Livre des lois des pays*, Paris, 1899; Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* vi. 9, 10, has preserved two fragments to be found also in the *Recogn. Clem.* ix. 19, etc. *Cf.* Nau, *Une Biographie inédite de Bardesane l'astrologue*, Paris, 1897.

[3] Was it the Emperor Caracalla?

[4] He may have been the author of the Acts of St Thomas, written about this time, or at least of the hymns in it, which are touched with Gnosticism.

new regime; this did not hinder his writing against the persecution and the persecutors. He was regarded almost as a confessor.

Nevertheless, his fame was not unclouded. The people of Edessa, now more closely connected with the churches of the empire, where orthodoxy was gradually taking on a more definite shape, took alarm at some of the vagaries of their national poet. As usual, no doubt, his disciples went beyond him, and compromised his name. There were Bardesanites, and they were heretics. They called the Christians Paloutians, a reminiscence of a schism of the time of Bishop Palout. The author of the *Adamantius*, in the 4th century, attributes to them a very definite form of Docetism; they denied the resurrection of the body, and also that the devil was created by God. St Ephrem the Syrian represented the Bardesanites as most wary heretics, who cunningly dissembled their errors under a cloak of orthodox language.

In the other countries of Syria, the towns were Greek, at least officially, for among the lower classes, as in the country districts, various Aramaic dialects were spoken. The churches in these provinces were essentially Greek in language. It was not so in Edessa, where everyone spoke Syriac; it was the language of the liturgy and sermons. This fact, combined with its position, fitted the capital of Osroëne for mission work in the western provinces of the Parthian Empire, where Syriac was also spoken. And indeed, the most credible legends point to Edessa as the evangelizer of this land. No doubt Edessa was also concerned in the introduction of Christianity into Armenia.

4. *Southern Syria.*

Christianity does not appear to have spread so rapidly in the country of its birth, as in Northern Syria and in Asia Minor. At the time of the first apostolic preaching, the Lebanon and the valleys of the Orontes and the Jordan, with the table-lands stretching towards the great Syrian desert beyond, were hardly Hellenized at all. Except in the Greek, or partially Greek, coast-towns, and in

similar settlements in the interior, nothing was as yet spoken but Canaanite or Aramaic dialects. The Lebanon was full of ancient temples and sacred streams connected with a mythology of much earlier date than Alexander's conquest. In important communities on the lake of Tiberias, in the plain of Sharon, and the country beyond Jordan, Jewish customs and traditions were still maintained. The Samaritans had not disappeared. On the fringe of the desert, the nomadic Bedouin tribes either threatened, or withdrew, according to the strength of the frontier. Greek civilization, however, made continual progress. By the 2nd century, all the small states of the interior had one by one disappeared; the Roman stations, from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, had in their rear, a province of their own, where towns, roads, and monuments were springing up, together with municipal government, the use of the Greek language, and all the uniform organization of Rome. Even the gods were Hellenized. Baal, to his surprise, found himself in company with Jupiter. The Greek Aphrodite reappeared in Astoreth; she, at least, had come back to her own country.

This progress was all in favour of Christianity. The diminishing number of Judaic-Christians did not count for much. It was from the great coast towns, Cæsarea, Tyre, and Berytus, that the Christian missions spread up-country, following step by step the advance of Roman civilization. In Hadrian's time Jerusalem, which the Church of the Circumcision had had to abandon, was recovered by the Church of the Gentiles. Cæsarea, Tyre, and many other towns contained important Christian communities. These, however, do not appear in history, until the time of the Paschal controversy (*c.* 190 A.D.), in connection with which a council was held in Palestine,[1] as elsewhere. Bishop Theophilus of Cæsarea, and Bishop Narcissus of Ælia (Jerusalem) there met Cassius of Tyre, Clarus of Ptolemais, and several others. Tyre and Ptolemais were in the province of Syria (Cœle Syria), whilst Cæsarea and Jerusalem were in that of Palestine. The episcopal Sees

[1] Eusebius v. 23, 25.

were not therefore as yet grouped on the lines of the Roman provinces. The synodical letter of the bishops of Phœnicia and Palestine shows also that as to the date of Easter they were in entire agreement with the Bishop of Alexandria. These countries, indeed, were always more closely connected in ecclesiastical matters with Egypt, than with the metropolis of the East (Antioch).

Eusebius, who spent his whole life in Cæsarea, and who had ransacked the archives and libraries both there and in Jerusalem, betrays no knowledge of the history of his church previous to the time of Theophilus. He knows more about Jerusalem. The memory of the old bishop, Narcissus,[1] perhaps a little embellished, had been handed down to his day by oral tradition. The lists of bishops, whom the historian did not succeed in individualizing clearly,[2] give Narcissus fourteen Greek predecessors, not to mention fifteen bishops of the circumcision, beginning with St James. Rather a long list. Narcissus was elected in the reign of Commodus when Eleutherius held the See of Rome, that is about fifty years after the foundation of Ælia Capitolina.[3] Eusebius calls the predecessors of Narcissus Βραχύβιοι (short-lived). Narcissus did not take after them, for he lived to be about a hundred and twenty years old. In spite of the fame of his holiness and miracles, he was the victim of foolish calumnies, so that yielding to the attractions of the ascetic life, he fled into the desert. His flock, having long sought him in vain, elected a successor, then another, and even a third, who seem to have revived the tradition of their short-lived bishops. At last Narcissus reappeared. There were great rejoicings. But the old man was too much weakened by age to meet the requirements of his office. God came to his aid and sent him Alexander, the wise and learned Bishop of Cappadocia, who governed the Church of Jerusalem as assistant to the

[1] Eusebius v. 12, 22, 23, 25; vi. 8-11. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 5; v. 12.

[3] Eusebius gives this as the starting-point of the list. But even supposing that a Christian community organized itself round the Roman camp after the siege, and that this community had bishops, the difficulty still exists, though the time is a little prolonged.

venerable Narcissus, and when his long life ended, succeeded him. Alexander's episcopate lasted till the Decian persecution, and under him ecclesiastical learning flourished at Ælia Capitolina, where he founded the library which Eusebius turned to such account.

It was not only in Ælia and in the circle of the erudite Bishop Alexander, that Christian learning flourished. Cæsarea, where Origen had already been more than once, became the focus of his teaching after the year 231; orthodox Gnostic pilgrims flocked thither from the whole Hellenic world; scribes and librarians collected and published the discourses of the great theologian; his editions of the Bible, his commentaries and other works, were classified in many volumes, and formed the nucleus of a library long renowned. Not far off, at Nicopolis, the ancient Emmaus, dwelt the celebrated Julius Africanus (*Sex. Julius Africanus*), who, born at Ælia, settled in Palestine after a somewhat wandering life. A soldier by profession, he had gone through the Parthian campaign in the army of Septimius Severus; a great hunter, he had scoured the forests with the Christian princes of Edessa. He was much interested in antiquities, and in the course of his journeys, he saw at Apamea in Phrygia, the remains of Noah's ark; at Edessa, Jacob's tent; at Shechem, the patriarch's terebinth. He had visited Alexandria and its catechetical school, when Heraclas occupied the seat of the absent Origen. Here he obtained a copy of the Hermetic books, which he greatly valued. On his return to Palestine, he took up municipal politics in Nicopolis, and even agreed to convoy a deputation of his fellow-citizens to Rome, where they wanted to obtain the protection of Elagabalus for their town. He was still in Rome at the time of Alexander Severus, for whom he arranged a library near the Pantheon.[1] He lived at least until the year 240.

The literary work of Julius Africanus is of a rather

[1] This fact, and the place of his birth were revealed to us by Papyrus, 412, Oxyrhynchus (Grenfell and Hunt), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. iii., p. 39.

miscellaneous nature. He first compiled a chronography in five books, in which the events of secular history were arranged in synchronism with Bible history. This was the first attempt at a synopsis of universal chronology. Already, other Christian savants, such as Justin, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, and Clement of Alexandria, had tried to demonstrate that the people of God dated from much further back than other nations; Julius Africanus put this idea into shape. His book made it possible to synchronize sacred and profane history in every century and even in every year. Eusebius made much use of this work, which unfortunately is lost in its original form. The years were reckoned from the creation, and Julius Africanus built up the later part of his chronology by means of the Olympiads. The period after Christ was treated very briefly. Nevertheless Eusebius derived the lists of bishops of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch from it. The dates of the Roman and Alexandrian bishops were given, and he used them in his chronicle and his history. This chronography came to an end in the fourth year of Elagabalus (221). According to Julius Africanus, the world was to last 6000 years. Three thousand years elapsed between the creation and the time of Phaleg, a patriarch who divided time as well as nations.[1] From Phaleg to Jesus Christ was 2500 years. The world, therefore, had only between three and four centuries more to run. This method of computation was also that of Hippolytus. The duration of time was regarded as being a great week, each day of which lasted a thousand years. This idea was derived from a well-known text.[2]

After the chronography, Julius Africanus published a kind of encyclopædia, the Cestes (Κεστοί), dedicated to the Emperor Alexander Severus, and containing many thousand observations and precepts. It is an amazing work. The author is a believer in magic; and his familiarity with the Hermetic and other similar books, taints the whole. His letter to Origen (*c.* 240 A.D.) on the authenticity of the

[1] The word Phaleg in Hebrew signifies division.

[2] Psalm lxxxiv. 10.

history of Susanna, and his letter to Aristides harmonizing the genealogies of the Gospel, are more consistent with his Christianity.

In the distant province of Arabia also, out of sight between the Jordan and the desert, Christianity flourished and manifested intellectual activity. In the early days of Caracalla (*c.* 214 A.D.), Origen visited this country for the first time, in strange circumstances. The imperial legate there had written to the prefect of Egypt and the Bishop of Alexandria, summoning him to his presence. That high official was apparently interested in Christian theology, and wished to hold converse with its most illustrious representative. A little later on, Beryllus, Bishop of Bostra, made his mark by his books and his letters.[1] He also was an expert theologian, but his opinions were not very orthodox. From the slight account given by Eusebius, he seems to have been influenced by the Christology of the Modalists, but rather by the system of Sabellius than that of Theodotus.[2] These errors had already been condemned in Rome. In Arabia also they had been strongly opposed. Beryllus had repeatedly to embark on controversies with the native bishops, as well as with various outsiders. Origen intervened. After long private conversations, he engaged Beryllus in a public discussion, and succeeded in clearly exposing the bishop's rather subtle errors, and, all honour to his polemical methods, he induced Beryllus to acknowledge and recant his errors. Detailed accounts of all these meetings, whether councils or not, were drawn up. This particular incident took place during the reign of Gordian III. (238-44).

Under Philip (244-49), or rather during the last years of his reign, Origen returned for the third time to Arabia, to refute still other errors. The two doctrines of the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul had been held to conflict with one another. Some held

[1] Eusebius vi. 20, 23.

[2] *Ibid.* 33: *τὸν σωτῆρα καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν λέγειν τολμῶν μὴ προϋφεστάναι κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίας περιγραφὴν πρὸ τῆς εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιδημίας, μηδὲ μὴν θεότητα ἰδιανέχειν, ἀλλ' ἐμπολιτευομένην αὐτῷ μόνην τὴν πατρικήν.*

only the former doctrine, to the exclusion of the other. A council was held; Origen spoke, and once more had the satisfaction of convincing those whom he controverted.

Philip, the emperor of the day, and his wife, Otacilia Severa, were both natives of the Arabian province, and brought up as Christians. They also were in correspondence with Origen, who wrote to both of them. Philip was a very indifferent Christian. One Easter day, being in Antioch, he presented himself at the church door. but Bishop Babylas refused him admission until he had done penance, and Philip had to comply with his demands.[1]

[1] Eusebius gives neither the name of the place nor the bishop; but the tradition of Antioch, dating certainly from the year 350 (see Leontius of Antioch, in the *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 270, Dindorf), and alluded to later by St John Chrysostom and others, supplies the omission.

CHAPTER XXII

PAUL OF SAMOSATA

Novatianism in Antioch. Revolutions in the East; the Sassanides, Princes of Palmyra. Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch; his conduct and doctrine. Eastern Councils. Struggle for the bishopric of Antioch. Aurelian's decision.

BABYLAS of Antioch and Alexander of Jerusalem were the most illustrious Eastern victims of the Decian persecution. No sooner was this storm over than here, as in the West, the problem of the apostates came up. The Roman schism of Novatian had, as has been said, made a great stir in the Eastern provinces, where the puritan principles championed by Novatian gained many adherents. Fabius,[1] the new Bishop of Antioch, who had succeeded the martyr Babylas, made a difficulty as to recognising Pope Cornelius, and his opposition did not stand alone. Over this question the bishops of Syria and Upper Asia Minor for the first time took concerted action in a manner which became permanent, and which, before long, led to the most serious consequences. The Bishop of Tarsus, (Helenus), and the Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, (Firmilian), and the Bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, (Theoctistus) invited their brother Bishop, Dionysius of Alexandria, to assist at the Council they were about to hold in Antioch. The situation was very serious, for the promoters of this gathering were opposed to the views of Fabius. Dionysius was little inclined to intervene personally in so acute a conflict. He confined himself to

[1] Eusebius vi. 43, 44, 46.

supporting by letter the lenient side; and in this strain he wrote to the Church of Laodicea in Syria, where the bishop was named Thelymidres, and to that of Armenia,[1] under Bishop Merouzanes. After all the solution was simpler than might have been expected. Fabius died, and his successor, Demetrian, forsook Novatian's party; and in Laodicea, Thelymidres, who apparently followed Fabius' line, was succeeded by Bishop Heliodorus. We do not know whether the Council ever met, and the important point is that peace was restored, and Dionysius of Alexandria was able before long to tell Pope Stephen that all the churches from Bithynia and Pontus to Arabia and Palestine were now at one.

But this optimistic report must not disguise the fact that in the 4th century a great number of Novatianist or Rigorist communities existed, at least in Asia Minor, and that, from the time of the Council of Nicæa, the Eastern councils, and even the Imperial government, had perpetually to devote attention to them. This state of things, as it can hardly be accounted for by any later proselytizing movement, leads one to suppose that the unity among the shepherds, to which the Bishop of Alexandria testified, represented but imperfectly the attitude of the flock, and that in consequence the settlement of the difficulties raised by the Decian persecution led to various local schisms.

Pope Stephen, to whom Dionysius of Alexandria wrote, nearly brought about a far more serious division by his rash severity. In the reconciliation of heretics, the bishops of Upper Asia Minor did not observe the same ritual as did the Roman Church. Stephen, who had not hesitated to sever his connection with the African Church, on account of a similar divergence, was not less uncompromising towards the bishops of Cilicia, Galatia, Cappadocia, and the neighbouring provinces. Firmilian was not intimidated; he joined energetically in Cyprian's resist-

[1] Τοῖς κατὰ Ἀρμενίαν, says Eusebius. He can only be alluding here to Roman Armenia or Armenia Minor, then included in the province of Cappadocia.

ance, and the letter which he wrote to Cyprian was indeed little calculated to bring about a peaceful solution. However, this dangerous quicksand was avoided, as before, by a change at the helm. Stephen's successor, Xystus II., took up a less inflexible attitude, and friendly relations were resumed.

It was indeed time: for these unhappy Eastern lands were soon overwhelmed by fearful calamities. Valerian had changed his attitude towards the Christians; and the leaders of the Church, when the authorities contrived to capture them, lay in prison awaiting harsher proceedings. But persecution was not the worst calamity impending. The persecuting empire itself was shaking to its foundations: on all sides the frontiers yielded before the onslaughts of the barbarians; the pirates of the Black Sea landed hordes of Goths upon the shores of Pontus, and carried desolation far into the interior. The struggle in the far East over the possession of Mesopotamia and the protectorate of Armenia, which never ceased for long, now assumed a far more threatening character. The Parthian dynasty had been succeeded at Ctesiphon by that of the Sassanides, one of true Persian origin, and the movement which brought them in was inspired by new enthusiasm for the national traditions of Iran and its religious institutions. Already, under the first sovereign, Ardaschir (224-41), there had been a hard struggle over Mesopotamia, and the empire had with difficulty retained possession of the fortified places. Sapor I., the successor of Ardaschir made himself master of Armenia in 253. There was now nothing to prevent the Persian cavalry from overrunning Cappadocia and Syria. And so they did. The Emperor Valerian hastened to the East, and drove the enemy back beyond the Euphrates; but as he went to raise the siege of Edessa, he was captured by the Persians, and soon after died in captivity.

In Rome his son Gallienus succeeded him; but in the East, the loss of the emperor had disorganised the whole defence. Syria and Asia Minor lay at the mercy of the Persians. They surprised and seized Antioch, which they

pillaged and burnt, carrying numbers of its inhabitants into captivity. A colony of them was formed in the depths of Susiana.[1] The same fate overtook Tarsus and Cæsarea in Cappadocia. The Roman army in Asia had ceased to exist. But this huge raid ended, as all such operations must end. The conquerors returned to their own homes, to enjoy the plunder, and their retreat was harassed by bands of professed allies, attracted by the richness of the spoil.

In the midst of this disorder, a Roman officer, Macrian, entirely ignoring Gallienus, proclaimed his two sons emperors. But Odenath, Prince of Palmyra, upheld the interests of Gallienus, and having disposed of the usurpers, faced the victorious Persians, re-established the frontiers, and throughout the East succeeded in obtaining recognition of his claim to be the Emperor Gallienus' representative. On his death, in 267, his wife Zenobia, as guardian of her young son, Vaballath, kept a strong hold on the power her husband had claimed, and her own efforts supporting it, extended her authority as far as Egypt. In Asia Minor also, she enlarged her borders continually. She held Chalcedon, and was just about to seize Byzantium, when Aurelian, who became emperor, 270 A.D., thought it time to arrest the conquests of his encroaching satrap. After a long siege, the general, Probus, regained possession of Alexandria in 270, and this great town was almost entirely destroyed by the siege and the hand-to-hand fighting in the streets. But Aurelian found it a longer task to quell the energetic Zenobia. Gradually, however, he succeeded in driving her back beyond the Taurus, and, having defeated her near Antioch, finally (272) forced her to retreat to Palmyra, her refuge in the desert. With Zenobia a prisoner reserved for the Roman triumph, the East resumed its normal condition.

Aurelian was hardly settled again in Antioch, when a question was referred to him of a totally unexpected kind.

[1] According to legends of but slight authority, the Bishop of Antioch, Demetrian, was amongst the captives sent to Susiana. They were employed in the construction of the great dam of Shuster.

He had to determine who was the legitimate Bishop of the Christian Church in Antioch. Two claimants contested the See and possession of the bishop's house. We must now turn to the history of this contest,[1] which in many respects was of considerable importance. Soon after the disaster at Antioch, Bishop Demetrian was succeeded by a certain Paul, a native of Samosata. He was of humble birth, but very clever and eloquent, and he so abused his episcopal position that before long he contrived to amass a considerable fortune. Either before or after his elevation to the episcopate, he had obtained the post of Receiver General of finances, with a salary of 200,000 sesterces (*procurator ducenarius*). Queen Zenobia held him in high esteem, and even from the lay point of view, he was one of the most important people in Antioch. This was apparent as he stalked through the streets, with a haughty bearing and preoccupied air, preceded and followed by a large band of attendants. He himself did not forget it, even in Church, where he gave way to the lamentable practice of permitting homage to be addressed to the bishop in the place of the Divinity, devoting minute attention to the adornment of his throne and its accessories, and not only allowing himself to be applauded in church, but even permitting hymns in his praise to be sung by a chorus of women. His private life was also not beyond reproach: he caused scandal by his association with subintroductæ (spiritual sisters). However, as he was very indulgent to the weaknesses of his clergy, his worldliness would have been forgiven him, if he had not taken up theology. This proved his ruin. Zenobia was much attached to Jews and Judaism, and either to please her, or pursuing his own bent, he went so far as to teach the people of Antioch a doctrine resembling that of Theodotus and Artemas, viz., that Christ became God by gradual development and by adoption. The enemies who surrounded him complained to the chief bishops of the East. And their complaints did not fall on deaf ears. Several councils were held in Antioch, which were not

[1] Eusebius vii. 27-30.

convened by Paul. And Firmilian, the famous Bishop of Cappadocia, was the moving spirit of this action of the episcopate. With him were Gregory of Neo Cæsarea and his brother Athenodorus, and the bishops of Tarsus, Iconium, Cæsarea in Palestine, Ælia, Bostra, and many others also assisted at the councils. Dionysius of Alexandria, though entreated to join them and to come to Antioch, excused himself on the score of age and health; but he wrote expressing his views on the matter to the Church of Antioch, and *not* to the bishop, which was significant.

It was not an easy question to disentangle. Firmilian and his colleagues made two journeys to Antioch, with no practical result. Paul's subtle quibbling intellect always discovered some loophole of escape; and if begged to mend his ways he made fine promises, but did nothing. A third Council, held in 267 or 268, ended the scandal. Maximus, the successor of Dionysius, was not present; nor was Firmilian, for he died on his way there. But a great number of bishops (seventy or eighty) assembled from Asia Minor and Syria, not to mention priests and deacons. This time they relied on Malchion, a priest of great learning, who combined with his ecclesiastical office that of Head of the "Hellenic" School[1] of Antioch. Malchion engaged his bishop in a formal discussion, in the presence of the Council and a large body of reporters. He was sufficiently skilful to get Paul to crystallize his hazy ideas, and to make him formulate his tenets. The doctrine which Paul acknowledged was declared untenable. The Council pronounced a sentence of deposition, replaced Paul by Domnus, a son of the former Bishop Demetrian, and then wrote to Dionysius and Maximus, the bishops of Rome and Alexandria, begging them no longer to correspond with the deposed prelate, but with Domnus. As to Paul, they added, he might communicate with Artemas[2] and his followers.

[1] Eusebius vii. 29, *τῆς τῶν ἐπ' Ἀντιοχείας Ἑλληνικῶν παιδευτηρίων διατριβῆς προεστώς.*

[2] This seems to imply that Artemas was still living and in Rome. See above, pp. 218 and 220.

Paul refused to acknowledge this ruling of the Council. Relying on his rather shady popularity, his official position, his party amongst the clergy, and, above all, on Zenobia's protection, he continued to consider himself bishop, and to hold his own in the episcopal palace. This was how things stood when the matter was brought before Aurelian. The emperor decided that the true bishop was the one recognized in Italy and at Rome. This was a decision against Paul. He was evicted.

The report of the debate between Paul and Malchion was long preserved. It was still quoted in the 6th century. We now possess only a few fragments, some of doubtful authenticity. This is the more regrettable, because Eusebius only records that part of the synodical letter to Dionysius and Maximus, which refers to Paul's moral conduct and character, suppressing all allusion to the discussion on his doctrines. One point, however, is established by the testimony of the 4th century, namely, that the term ὁμοούσιος (consubstantial) which created so much sensation in the time of Constantine, was then expressly repudiated by the council, no doubt because it was susceptible of a Modalist interpretation.[1] It is also clear, from the fragments which have been preserved, that Paul, though identifying himself with the arguments of the old adversaries of the theology of the Logos, had profited considerably by the general advance in religious knowledge. He stopped, it is said, the singing of the old hymns, and fell foul of the old theologians, no doubt because both witnessed to a Personal Word. But he had subtilized his conceptions and exegesis by intercourse with the masters whom he criticized. And this was precisely what embarrassed his judges; they were disciples of Origen, and they found Paul employing the identical expressions used by their master. But the

[1] This is St Hilary's explanation (*De synodis*, 81, 86) and St Basil's Ep. 52); St Athanasius (*De syn.* 43) has another which is very subtle. Some years before, Pope Dionysius had reproved Dionysius of Alexandria for his hesitation in making use of the term. It is quite clear that the same meaning was not attached to it everywhere.

similarity was only in expression. Paul cared little for the cosmological Trinity of the school of Origen; the Trinity which he recognized was but a Trinity of names; as to the Personality of Christ, he looked for it only in His human and historical existence. On these two points, however open to criticism the systems proposed by his adversaries might be, he was certainly out of the line of orthodox Church tradition.

CHAPTER XXIII

DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria. His fortunes during the Decian persecution. His attitude towards apostates and heretics. Exile under Valerian. Alexandrian crisis. The Millenarians of Egypt; Nepos. Sabellianism in Cyrenaica. Dionysius of Alexandria and Dionysius of Rome. Eusebius and Anatolus of Laodicea.

THE obscurity which characterized the history of Alexandrian and Egyptian Christianity in the 2nd century, lasted until the eve of the Decian persecution. We know nothing of the Bishops Demetrius (189-231) and Heraclas (231-47), except in connection with the story of Origen.[1] On the whole, Heraclas seems to have maintained his predecessor's attitude towards the illustrious theologian, who remained absent from Alexandria. Dionysius (247-64), who succeeded to his See after following him as head of the School, is better known than his predecessors. Like Cyprian, he left a collection of letters, now lost, of which Eusebius has preserved long extracts and analyses. His episcopate coincides with a period much disturbed in Church history as a whole, and particularly critical in Alexandria. Dionysius was hardly installed when a savage riot broke out in the great city. At first, the instigators gave it a religious turn; the populace was suddenly inflamed by a ferocious enthusiasm for their threatened gods. The local

[1] See above, chap. xviii. Local tradition before long distorted this history, attributing Origen's controversy with the Bishop of Alexandria to his doctrine, and assigning to Heraclas the part played by Demetrius.

authorities, overpowered or implicated, did not interfere. The Christians were persecuted and ill-treated, and their houses pillaged. Of those who refused to apostatize, some were stoned and some burned, or thrown from the roofs; many fled. After a time, the tumult, though it did not abate, took a fresh direction, and civil war made the streets of Alexandria run with blood. At this crisis came the news of the accession of the Emperor Decius, and soon after, the edict of persecution was published.

The prefect Sabinus lost no time; a guard was at once despatched to arrest the bishop. He was sought for everywhere except in his own house, from which he had never stirred. At the end of four days, he fled with his family and other Christians. But the police authorities caught him, and with him arrested some of his clergy, Caius, Faustus, Peter, and Paul. Brought back, under escort, to Alexandria, he halted the same evening at the village of Taposiris, where he was somewhat dramatically rescued.[1] His son Timotheus was absent when he was arrested. On his return he found the house empty; learning what had happened, he took to flight, and meeting a peasant, told him of his trouble. The peasant was on his way to a wedding. He hurried on, and told the tale to the wedding-party; they, like true Egyptians, were delighted to play a trick on the authorities, and rushed to Taposiris shouting wildly. The centurion and his men were terrified and fled; and the bishop himself, taking his rescuers for brigands, was far from comfortable. He had begun to hand over his clothes before they made him understand that they had come to deliver him, and not to rob him. Then the scene changed. Dionysius, believing the martyr's crown to be already his, was unwilling to relinquish it. He implored them either to leave him, or to cut off his head and carry it to the prefect. But the good peasants would not hear of such a thing; seizing the bishop by the arms and legs, they hoisted him on their shoulders and disappeared with him. His clergy were also set free. And in a few days they were all established in

[1] Letters from Dionysius, in Eusebius vi. 40; vii. 11.

an out-of-the-way corner of Libya, three days' journey from Parætonium.

Thence, for long months, the Church of Alexandria was administered. When the worst was over, such priests and deacons as were least likely to be recognized, returned to the city. Among them are mentioned Maximus, the priest who later on succeeded Dionysius, and the deacons Eusebius and Faustus, who had a long and useful career still before them. When the persecution still further slackened, Dionysius returned to Alexandria himself.

Then he, like so many others, had to face the question of the apostates. In Egypt, as elsewhere, there was a conflict between severity and leniency. Dionysius sided with the lenient and was fortunate in having the confessors, not against him, but in favour of indulgence. The lapsed were therefore re-admitted, but not without a penance which the bishop proportioned to the degree of guilt. These principles he applied in Alexandria; and also recommended them to the other Christian congregations in Egypt, and he zealously defended them against the puritanical rigorists of Rome and Antioch. Pope Cornelius, who took the same line, was strongly supported in his struggle with Novatian by his brother of Alexandria, who wrote urgent letters to the faithful in Rome, to the confessors, and to Novatian himself. Dionysius moreover adjured Bishop Fabius of Antioch, the Bishop of Laodicea, near Antioch, and the faithful in Armenia Minor,[1] not to yield to puritan counsels.

The persecution under Gallus[2] disturbed this tranquillity but did not last long; peace was restored under Valerian (August, 253). Shortly afterwards broke out the baptismal controversy, in which Dionysius played an important part, upholding, with Pope Stephen, the custom of not rebaptizing heretics. He refused, however, to break on that account with churches which took a different line.[3] This controversy was dying down when Valerian,

[1] See letters quoted or analyzed in Eusebius vi. 41-46.

[2] Eusebius vii. 1, 10.

[3] Epistles on Baptism, Eusebius vii. 2-9. See above, pp. 305-11.

weakly yielding to the fanatical advice of his minister Macrian, declared war afresh against Christianity. Dionysius,[1] summoned before the prefect Æmilian, appeared accompanied by some of his clergy; in one of his letters is preserved[2] a verbatim report of his trial; it resulted in his exile to a place called Kephro, inhabited only by pagans. The bishop took up mission work, and in spite of the bad reception he met with at first, he gained converts in this remote place. After a time he was transferred to Kollouthion, in Mareotis, where he was nearer to Alexandria. We do not know how he escaped the edict of 258, which ordered the execution of all bishops. Although he had endured so much in the persecution, there were people in Egypt who upbraided him for having escaped martyrdom. A bishop, named Germanus, made such a stir about it that Dionysius thought it well to recount his sufferings by way of defence.[3]

The list was long, but Dionysius had not yet reached the end. Having returned to Alexandria, on receipt, no doubt, of the news of Valerian's downfall, he soon saw civil war kindled. Some stood by Gallienus; others proclaimed the sons of Macrianus. The town was divided into two entrenched camps, with all communication cut off between them. The main street divided them. No one passed along it, and it called to mind the image of the desert of the Exodus, just as the waters of the port, stained with the blood of the combatants, recalled the Red Sea. This internal blockade stopped the bishop's communications with his flock; he was obliged to write to them, as if again in exile. And even so, it was difficult to get his letters through. It was easier to send messages from one end of the empire to the other, than from one quarter of Alexandria to the other.[4]

In the end, the whole city declared for Gallienus.[5]

[1] See p. 273 of this volume. [2] To Germanus, Eusebius vii. 11

[3] For fragments of this apology, see Eusebius vi. 40; vii. 11.

[4] Eusebius vii. 21.

[5] No doubt in 262, after the death of Macrian and his two sons.

Before fresh political disturbances set in,[1] it was devastated by a terrible plague, which swept away a great part of the population. The Christians were conspicuous for their zeal in nursing the sick and burying the dead.[2] It was at least a time of religious peace; Gallienus himself wrote to Dionysius and to several other bishops, to inform them that he had ordered their churches and cemeteries to be restored to them. Naturally the bishop was a strong partizan of this prince, who does not usually excite much admiration. In one of his letters, written in 262, Dionysius notes that whereas the persecutors had rapidly passed away,[3] the tenth year of the reign of this holy and pious emperor would soon be celebrated with rejoicings.

During his stormy episcopate, Dionysius still found time and opportunity for theology, and thus turned to account the great learning he had acquired under Origen, and developed during his headship of the School of Alexandria. This School, as I have already said, was suited rather to the intellectual *élite* than to ordinary minds. Even among those who read, there were many who accepted neither the profundity of Origen's Gnosticism, nor the subtleties of allegorical interpretation. Their great light was a bishop called Nepos, and his book, called *The Refutation of the Allegorists*, was placed by his partizans on a level with the Gospels. Its subject was the Millenium, and Nepos set himself to prove that as described in the Apocalypse it was not allegorical, but was to be an actual fact. Dionysius, uneasy at its success, and the strife it stirred up amongst the Christians, went to the *nome* of Arsinoë, the centre of the movement, and called together the priests and teachers (διδασκάλους) of the different villages. They brought Nepos' book, and quietly and honestly discussed it for three days, from morning till night, to such good purpose that the Bishop of Alexandria brought them all round, even Korakion,

[1] In Augustan history we hear of various "tyrants" of Egypt (Æmilian, Firmus, and Saturninus), but their existence is doubtful; *cf.* Mommsen, *Rom. Gesch.*, vol. iii., p. 571, note 1.

[2] Eusebius vii. 22. [3] Eusebius vii. 22, 23.

the chief of the Millenarians. Dionysius, however, not content with this *viva voce* refutation, published two treatises on the subject, called "On the Promises."[1] Eusebius quotes from it, amongst other things, a long passage upon the author of the Apocalypse. It is a piece of fine criticism. According to Dionysius, the Apocalypse could not be by the same author as the Fourth Gospel, but was the work of another John, not the great apostle.

Nepos, the opponent of the allegorists, was already dead when Dionysius turned his attention to his book. He was apparently Bishop of Arsinoë. Dionysius, who had known him personally, had a great opinion of his piety, zeal, and knowledge of the Scriptures, and even of his poetical gifts. He had composed a great number of hymns sung by the faithful with much profit.[2]

Possibly this incident occurred in the beginning of Valerian's reign (254-56). Later on Dionysius was occupied with controversies of another kind.

Far away to the west of Egypt, between the desert of Marmarica and the Great Syrtis, stretches a high and fertile plain. There from very early days, Hellenism had flourished round the brilliant Doric town of Cyrene. Under the Roman Empire, Cyrenaica with Crete formed a province quite distinct from that of Egypt. The group of five towns—Cyrene, Ptolemais, Berenice, Sozusa (Apollonia) and Arsinoë (Teuchira)—which it contained,[3] was often called Pentapolis. There were very important Jewish colonies there.[4] Early in Trajan's time they made a revolt, and nearly all perished during its suppression. The name of this country appears in the Gospel history. It was a Jew from Cyrene who assisted the Saviour to carry His cross.[5] Others were present on the Day of Pentecost, and some were amongst the enemies of St Stephen. Amongst the many converts was that Lucius of Cyrene, who took part

[1] Περὶ ἐπαγγελιῶν. [2] Eusebius vii. 24, 25.

[3] This Arsinoë must not be confused with the Arsinoë just mentioned in connection with Nepos.

[4] Jason of Cyrene, a Jewish writer in the 2nd century B.C., wrote a history, of which an epitome is preserved in the Second Book of Maccabees. [5] Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26.

in the foundation of the Church of Antioch.[1] The Gospel seems to have reached Cyrene itself very early. And in Dionysius' time each[2] of the five cities seems to have had its bishop.

These churches had then a special connection with the See of Alexandria. Dionysius wrote to them often,[3] and held himself responsible for them, and above all for their teaching. Even before Valerian's persecution, the controversy which the spread of Sabellianism stirred up in Ptolemais had called his attention that way. It is not likely that Sabellius ever set foot in Cyrenaica; but his writings may have found their way there, and besides, the views identified with his name in Rome, had already made a sensation in Asia, Carthage, and elsewhere. In Cyrenaica their success was very great: some bishops favoured the Monarchian doctrine; in those churches the Word was no longer regarded as the Son of God, and distinct from the Father. The doctrine of the Trinity became but a matter of words: the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, meant no more than three successive aspects of the Divine Unity (Monad) in Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification. The word *υἱοπάτωρ* (Son-Father) was often employed, and fitly expressed their conception of the identity of the Divine Persons. The so-called Gospel of the Egyptians was much esteemed by the Monarchians,[4] and apparently favoured this view.

[1] Acts ii. 10; vi. 9; xi. 20; xiii. 1.

[2] Eusebius (vii. 26) gives the names of Dionysius' correspondents on Sabellianism. They were four: Ammon, Bishop of Berenice, Telesphorus, Euphranor, and Euporus. If these last three were bishops, as seems probable, that makes four bishops, or five with Basilides, bishop *τῶν κατὰ τὴν Πεντάπολιν παροικιῶν* mentioned later on.

[3] Eusebius (*loc. cit.*) mentions several letters to Basilides, a Bishop of Pentapolis; one of these in response to various questions on points of casuistry submitted to him, is preserved in the Byzantine canon law; in another, Dionysius alludes to his own commentary on Ecclesiastes. To Bishop Euphranor he dedicated a book *On the Temptations*.

[4] This description of the system rests on the authority of St Epiphanius, *Haer.* 57; the quotations from the writings of Dionysius in Eusebius vii. 6 (*cf.* 26) and from S. Athanasius, *De sent. Dionysii* are by no means so definite.

In spite of the support of local bishops, this teaching met with much opposition. Both parties agreed to refer the matter to the Bishop of Alexandria. The delegates appeared before Dionysius, bearing credentials, and proposed to argue the case before him.

But the Modalists were very simple if they imagined that a disciple of Origen could decide in their favour. The Bishop of Alexandria would not even hear them; he wrote at once to Pentapolis, hoping to deter those who were straying from the truth, and as an opportunity offered he warned Pope Xystus II. and sent him his letter to the Cyrenians.[1] But the Cyrenians turned a deaf ear. The controversy, interrupted no doubt by Valerian's persecution, began afresh as soon as peace was restored. Dionysius returned to the attack, and wrote letter after letter to Pentapolis. In one of these[2] addressed to Ammon and Euphranor, he seems to have gone too far, and to have attempted to refute the heretics not only with the generally received doctrine of the Church, but also with an exposition of the tenets peculiar to Origen's School. The opponents of the School in Alexandria took advantage of this. Without troubling themselves to ask their bishop for an explanation, they went to Rome, and denounced him to Pope Dionysius, who summoned a synod, looked into the matter, and found various doctrinal improprieties in the letter under suspicion, notably three:—The use of the term "creature," in connection with the Son of God; a theory of the Trinity with three such distinct hypostases, that they might be regarded as three gods; and finally, a marked repugance to the term ὁμοούσιος (consubstantial).[3]

[1] Eusebius vii. 6. In chap. xxvi. he enumerates four letters against Sabellius: to Ammon, Bishop of Berenice, Telesphorus, Euphranor, and to Ammon and Euporus.

[2] I think this letter, so much spoken of by St Athanasius, is distinct from those mentioned by Eusebius. It might, however, at a push be identified, perhaps, with that to Ammon and Euporus.

[3] Athanasius, *De sent. Dion.* c. 5. It is well to note that S. Athanasius treats the matter rather controversially than historically. His chronology is much at fault. He believes the two Dionysiuses lived long before (ἐμπροσθεν πολύ) the council which condemned Paul of Samosata (*De syn.* 43).

The Bishop of Rome, in his own name and in that of the Council, sent an impressive letter[1] to Alexandria, in which he again condemned the Sabellian errors; and then, turning to the arguments used to refute them, without mentioning any names, he blamed those who, like the Marcionites, spoke of three separate hypostases, or who represented the Son of God as a creature. Their appeal to the authority of the Book of Proverbs was not legitimate, for though Wisdom says of herself: "The Lord created me," their interpretation of the text was not correct.[2]

In a separate letter[3] to Dionysius he invited him to explain himself. He did so, and in defence of his position sent four books to the pope, his namesake, entitled *Refutation and Apology*,[4] which appear to have set at rest the Roman scruples.

This controversy does not seem to have made much impression at the time; but a great stir was made about it in the 4th century. The Arians quoted the authority of Dionysius of Alexandria. His successor Athanasius, being eager to clear him from complicity in it, wrote a whole treatise "On the Opinion of Dionysius." He carefully explains the suspected letter, but hardly quotes it at all, and he takes the opinion of his predecessor, rather, from the *Apology*, which was an afterthought, and thus interprets the first document by the second. St Basil[5] also read both documents; and his verdict was very unfavourable. Holding no brief for former bishops of Alexandria, he had no hesitation in pronouncing Dionysius to be a forerunner of Arianism in its most pronounced form. The difference between the language of the two books in no wise escaped his notice, but he attributes it to the instability of the author, whose good faith, however, he does not question.

But neither St Athanasius' optimism, nor St Basil's

[1] Athanasius, *De decretis Nic. syn.*, c. 26.

[2] See above, p. 257, note 1.

[3] Athanasius, *De sent. Dion.*, c. 13.

[4] Eusebius vii. 26; *cf.* Athan., *De synodis*, 44; *De decretis Nic.*, 25, and *De sent. Dion.* passim.

[5] Ep. 41.

severity quite corresponds with the actual facts. Dionysius was a disciple of Origen; it was with Origen's system that he fought the Modalists. Now, this system had two aspects. According as the Word is viewed in relation to the finite transitory world, or to God, He appears either as distinct from God, and partaking in some degree of the character of a created being; or else, as co-eternal with God, and deriving from the divine substance. The Modalists might be met by the first aspect; and the second was calculated to reassure those who were disturbed by the excessively clear cut lines of demarcation drawn between the different manifestations, or hypostases, and by their subordination. The transition from one aspect to the other involved no contradiction; they were linked together in Origen's system; orthodoxy was safeguarded by the juxtaposition of complementary doctrines. But the whole system was academic; it formed no part of the teaching of the Church; it might even be said that the Church ignored it. When men of action like Pope Dionysius came across isolated fragments of the system, they did not trouble to put them back into their context, or to judge of them in relation to the whole system; they estimated them on their own merits, according to the ordinary teaching, not of the schools, but of the Church. Hence such incidents as the controversy between Dionysius the pope and Dionysius the bishop.

Quite at the end of his career, the great Bishop of Alexandria was, as we have seen, invited to the first Council of Antioch, to judge Paul of Samosata. He was no longer fit for so long a journey; but he gave his opinion in writing. And perhaps Eusebius, the Alexandrian deacon, who appeared at one of the first councils, came as his representative. Eusebius was held in great esteem on account of his fine attitude during the Decian persecution. Being one of the earliest to return to the town, he played an important part in the government of the persecuted flock. Under Valerian, he stood as a confessor before the prefect Æmilian, with his bishop, and shared Dionysius' exile. In one of the wars which desolated

Alexandria, no doubt that described in the letter from Dionysius to Hierax, he did good service. The insurgents were cut off in the quarter of the Bruchium. Among their leaders was a Christian named Anatolius, a great mathematician. When he saw the corn beginning to fail, it occurred to him to appeal to the deacon Eusebius in the unbesieged part of the town, and to get him to ask the Roman general to allow the deserters to pass out of the Bruchium. Eusebius was held in high consideration, even in the official world; and his request was granted. Then Anatolius assembled the insurgent council of war, and after having vainly tried to persuade them to capitulate, he got them to allow all the non-combatants to pass out. A great many passed out, the Romans not showing themselves too strict as to the age or sex of the fugitive. They were welcomed by Eusebius, who supplied their pressing necessities. Afterwards Eusebius started for the Council at Antioch. He never returned to Alexandria. The Church of Laodicea detained him on his return, and having just lost their bishop, they chose Eusebius as his successor.

Anatolius, having compromised himself, no doubt during the recent insurrection, thought it best to leave Alexandria, although he had a good position there. He excelled in all the sciences, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, physics, logic, and rhetoric. His fellow-countrymen had chosen him as head of their school of Aristotelian philosophy. At Cæsarea in Palestine, he received a warm welcome from the Bishop Theoctistus, who consecrated him to be his successor. But Anatolius went to the last Council of Antioch, in 268, and there met with the same fate as did his friend Eusebius who had just died; the good folk of Laodicea seized on the already consecrated Anatolius, and kept him as their bishop.

CHAPTER XXIV

EASTERN THEOLOGY AFTER ORIGEN AND PAUL OF SAMOSATA

The Alexandrian Doctors: Theognostus, Pierius, Achillas. Bishop Peter, the opponent of Origen. The work of Pamphilus and Eusebius at Cæsarea in Palestine. Methodius, Bishop of Olympus. Lucian of Antioch, and the beginnings of Arianism.

DIONYSIUS of Alexandria was succeeded by the priest Maximus, who, having distinguished himself much during the Decian persecution, openly confessed the faith, and was exiled under Valerian. In his time took place the final condemnation of Paul of Samosata, of which he received the official notification. No more is known about him, and Theonas,[1] who succeeded him (282), is no better known, though he also held the See for eighteen years, till A.D. 300. Then came Bishop Peter, who lived to see the Diocletian persecution, and was one of its most illustrious victims.

The School was still closely in touch with the Church, and still adhered faithfully to the doctrines of Origen. After Dionysius, Theognostus[2] seems to have directed it. He rewrote the *First Principles*, under the title of *Hypotyposes*, a name already used by Clement. Photius

[1] The letter of Theonas to the high chamberlain, Lucian, is a modern fabrication; see Batiffol. *Bull. critic.*, vol. vii., p. 155.

[2] Neither Eusebius nor St Jerome speak of Theognostus.

has left us an analysis[1] of this work which is divided into seven books. From the description and appreciation of it given by Photius, it was evidently in strict accord with the teaching of Origen. St Athanasius and St Gregory of Nyssa have preserved some fragments for us, but they regard it very differently. St Athanasius quotes from it[2] orthodox statements, whilst St Gregory of Nyssa considers that it favours the Arians.[3]

Pierius,[4] who came after Theognostus, belonged to the college of presbyters. Like Origen he cultivated plain living and high thinking. He was a celebrated ascetic and a distinguished preacher, being known to later writers even more by his sermons than by his teaching in the schools.[5] His principal work was a collection of exegetical homilies, delivered during the night of Easter Eve. Photius, who read it, notices the "archaism" of his formulas, and regrets that he should have spoken so ill of the Holy Ghost. Whatever justification there may be for this criticism, Pierius had a great reputation in his own day; his contemporaries called him the second Origen (*Origenes iunior*). He lived so long that he survived even the great persecution, when his most illustrious disciple, Pamphilus of Cæsarea in Palestine, died for the faith (309). Pierius wished to write his life, and, according to some traditions, himself died a martyr, with his brother Isidore. St Jerome,

[1] Cod. 282.

[2] Ep. 4, *ad Serap.*, c. 11; *De Decretis Nic.*, c. 25. Stephen Gobar (Photius, cod. 232) is rather scandalized at these quotations.

[3] *Adv. Eunomium*, Migne, *P. G.*, vol. xlv., p. 661. A fragment of Theognostus has been found at Venice by Fr. Diekamp, and published by him in the *Theol. Quartalschrift* of Tübingen, 1902, p. 483; *cf.* Harnack, in *Texte und Unt.*, vol. xxiv., fasc. 3.

[4] On Pierius, see Eusebius vii. 32; St Jerome, *De viris*, 76; *cf.* Ep., 49, 70; *in Matth.* xxiv. 36; Photius, cod. 118, 119; and the extracts from Philip of Side, published by C. de Boor (*Texte und Unt.*, vol. v., fasc. 2).

[5] Philip of Side and Photius describe him as being head of the School of Alexandria, but neither Eusebius nor St Jerome allude to this.

however, says that he retired to Rome and lived there till his death.[1]

During the years just before the persecution, the School had as its head Achillas, another scholar who was also a presbyter. Indeed, after the martyrdom of Bishop Peter he became bishop like Heraclas and Dionysius before him. Eusebius makes much of his virtue and austerity; but says nothing of his doctrine, details of which would have been of special interest, as at that moment fierce attacks on the theology of Origen were impending. Bishop Peter wrote books on the soul,[2] and on the resurrection,[3] in which he made formidable assaults on some of Origen's most important positions.

The subtle form of religious thought of which the School of Alexandria was the principal exponent, could only, as I have said before, appeal to the few. And though this illustrious School was generally presided over by priests of the Church, several of whom were raised to the episcopate, the Christian masses, as a whole, were unaffected by it. The spread of the Gospel in the interior of Egypt, which was very rapid in the 3rd century,

[1] Theodore, the poet-advocate of Alexandria, quoted in the 5th century by Philip of Side (*Texte und Unt.*, vol. v., fasc. 2, p. 171; *cf.* Photius, *loc. cit.*), says that Pierius and his brother Isidore were both martyrs, and that a great temple (ναὸν μέγιστον) was erected in their honour at Alexandria. It is certain that there was in Alexandria a Church of Pierius (Epip., *Haer.* lxix. 2). Perhaps two distinct Pierius have been confused.

[2] Procopius of Gaza, *In Genes.* iii. 21 (Migne, *P. G.*, vol. lxxxviii., p. 221); Leontius of Byzantium (Mai, *Scrip. vet.*, vol. vii., p. 85), and Justinian (*Ep. ad. Menam.*, *P. G.*, vol. lxxxvi., p. 961) quote a book of Peter περὶ τοῦ μηδὲ προϋπάρχειν τὴν ψυχὴν μηδὲ ἁμαρτήσασαν τοῦτο εἰς σῶμα βληθῆναι, in which the pre-existence of the soul and its fall, before its union with the body, is treated as a pagan idea (ἑλληνικῆς φιλοσοφίας) and quite contrary to Christian piety.

[3] The seven fragments of the treatise upon the resurrection preserved are in Syriac (Pitra-Martin, *Anal.*, vol. iv., pp. 189 and 426), except the first (II. A.) which comes from another book of Pierius, upon the divinity (περὶ θεότητος), quoted at the Council of Ephesus, several fragments of which have also been found in the Syriac MSS. discovered by P. Martin (*loc. cit.*, pp. 187, 425).

brought under the influence of Christianity people who were but slightly, if at all, Hellenized,[1] and who found it difficult to adapt themselves to this highly rarified atmosphere of philosophic speculation. Besides, the doctrines of the School, as summed up by Origen, rather disquieted even the cultivated, Gnostic, Christians on whom it conferred such marked distinction. It was possible even for those who had received a brilliant education in philosophy to realize that this advantage possessed but a very indirect spiritual value, and that salvation is not won by theology. Moreover, as the history of Anatolius shows, the Platonism, old or new, upon which the School relied was not the only kind of philosophy in vogue in Alexandria. It was possible, and probably it was not unusual, to develop religious instruction on the traditional lines, without perpetual side-glances in the direction of Valentinus or Basilides. Allegorical interpretation did not appeal to everyone. As we have seen, one bishop, Nepos, opposed it openly. Without it how were Origen's systems to be reconciled with the Bible? The faithful who denounced to Rome certain tenets of their Bishop Dionysius must have been people of some standing in Alexandria.

And it was this party in the Church of Alexandria, intellectual, cultivated people, but caring more for religion than theology, who now gained the upper hand in the person of Bishop Peter, and who, rather later on, were represented again by the Bishops Alexander and Athanasius.

In Palestine, the tradition of Origen still held the field at Cæsarea. A rich Christian of Berytus, Pamphilus by name, having renounced the position in his native country to which his fortune and good birth gave him a right, devoted himself to theological studies. He came to Alexandria, where Pierius helped him to develop his talents for theology and asceticism; then he established himself at Cæsarea, where he was admitted into the college of

[1] The Coptic versions of the Bible are of this date.

presbyters. His chief occupation was to transcribe and correct manuscripts of the Bible; but he also copied those of Origen, and drew up a catalogue of his works, and of the other books in the library left at Cæsarea by that great scholar. By his side worked a most intelligent and painstaking young Christian called Eusebius. Eusebius, during the fifteen or twenty years preceding the great persecution, ransacked with incredible patience all the libraries in Cæsarea, Ælia, and elsewhere, for the benefit of the great works on history and apology of which the scheme was simmering in his mind. Eusebius could not have known Origen; Pamphilus may perhaps have seen him during his childhood. But they were both enthusiastic disciples, and whenever the theories of their Master were attacked they hastened to defend him. Pamphilus wrote an Apology in five books, to which Eusebius added a sixth.

The adversaries, indeed, against whose attacks they had to defend him, were already legion. Without mentioning Modalists, such as Beryllus, or Paul of Samosata, the ranks of the orthodox furnished more than one type of assailant. One of the most distinguished of these was Methodius, bishop of the little town of Olympus in Lycia. He was, for his time, a very highly educated man, and a great reader of Plato, whose dialogues he loved to imitate. We have a "Banquet" of his, an echo of that of the Athenian philosopher; but the speakers are virgins, and they sing the praises of virginity and not love. The treatises of Methodius, on free-will, on life and reasonable actions, on the resurrection, on creatures (περὶ γενητῶν), on leprosy, on leeches, on different kinds of food, although lost in the original as a whole, are known to us, either in Greek fragments, or in a Slavonic translation.[1] Others, such as his books upon the pythoness, upon the martyrs, against Porphyry, have entirely, or almost entirely disappeared. The variety of his work, which includes exegesis and apology, metaphysics and morality, shows his versa-

[1] Bonwetsch, *Methodius von Olympus*, 1891. Photius made long extracts from Methodius, cod. 234-237.

tility Several of his dialogues, especially those on the resurrection and on creatures, contain a very lively protest against the doctrines of Origen. Eusebius, therefore, in his ecclesiastical history, does not mention Methodius, though he was obliged to speak of him in the *Apology*. According to St Jerome,[1] Eusebius there reminds Methodius that formerly he had entertained a very different opinion of the great doctor.[2] It is most probable that the Bishop of Olympus, though criticizing his errors, could not but admire the genius of Origen.

But Methodius himself, as not infrequently happens, laid himself open to very severe criticism. Photius[3] says very truly that the Banquet contains expressions that are not at all doctrinally correct; he even supposes charitably that various Arian or other interpolations had been introduced. This is scarcely probable; but Methodius wrote before the language, or even the ideas of theology had attained the precision they subsequently acquired from the theological debates of the 4th and 5th centuries. In spite, however, of all his peculiarities, the name of Methodius is worthy of respect. The world was grateful to him for having trounced Origen, and for having extolled virginity; and he laid down his life for the faith.

In Antioch the difficulties had not all vanished with the deposition of Paul of Samosata. Domnus, his successor, appointed by the Council, appears to have held the See but a short time; and so it was with Timæus, who came after him. The episcopate of Cyrillus, on the contrary, lasted until the persecution, more than twenty years. We know nothing of the government of these bishops, except that they were, not unnaturally, rather severe on the partizans of Paul, who had organized a small church of their own, still mentioned even at the time of the Council

[1] *Apol.* i. *adv. lib. Ruf.*, c. 11.

[2] Socrates also, *H. E.* vi. 13, says that in his dialogue *Xenon*, Methodius spoke of Origen with admiration. It is possible that this dialogue is identical with that on creatures (Photius, cod. 235), in which a speaker called Xenon does come in.

[3] Cod. 237.

of Nicea. The opposition had also a school, that of the priest Lucian.

Lucian[1] was a really learned man; his work on the text of the Old Testament, which he corrected from the original Hebrew, soon became famous; he was a Hebrew scholar, and his version was adopted by the greater number of the churches of Syria and Asia Minor. He occupied himself also with the New Testament.

His exegesis differed widely from that of Origen. In Antioch, allegorical interpretation was not in fashion; the text was by way of being interpreted literally. The theological trend of this school is shown by the well-established fact that Lucian was the originator of the doctrine, which soon became so famous as Arianism. Around him were grouped, even as early as this time we now speak of, the future leaders of this heresy, amongst others Arius himself, Eusebius, the future Bishop of Nicomedia, Maris, and Theognis. It was, they found, necessary to abandon the theories of Paul, and to admit the personal pre-existence of Christ, in other words the Incarnation of the Word. But they granted as little as possible. The Word, according to the new doctrine, was a celestial being, anterior to all visible and invisible creatures; He had indeed created them. But He had not existed from all eternity; He was created by the Father, as an instrument for the subsequent creation. Before that He did not exist. He was called out of nothing.[2]

We cannot deny that this theory greatly simplified the problem of the Procession of the Word, a difficult problem,

[1] According to the legend regarding him, which is, however, rather vague (ὡς ὁ περὶ αὐτοῦ λόγος), Lucian was born at Samosata, of distinguished parents; in his early youth he attended at Edessa the lectures of a celebrated exegesist called Macarius. But all this is very doubtful. The narrator appears to be inspired more by recollections of Lucian, the satirist, and of the fame of the schools at Edessa in the 5th century, than by trustworthy tradition. He wrote, besides, at rather a late date, for he relies upon Philostorgius. Upon this subject, see Pio Franchi de Cavalieri in the *Studi e doc. di storia e diritto*, 1897, p. 110 *et seq.*; cf. *Nuovo Bull. di archeol. crist.*, 1904, p. 37.

[2] St Jerome, *Praef. in Evv.*, *in Paralip.*, ep. 106.

to solve which many different explanations had been propounded during the previous two centuries, though none had been definitely accepted as the right interpretation. But this simplification was only obtained at the expense of one of the most essential articles of faith, that of the absolute Divinity of Christ. This dogma, handed down by tradition, cultivated by piety, consecrated by worship, and sealed by the blood of martyrs, was the corner-stone of all Christian teaching. Neither Origen nor Hippolytus, nor Justin, nor any of the many other orthodox teachers, not to mention the Gnostics, had ventured to ignore it. Its strength of resistance was soon to be proved.

For a time the system does not appear to have excited any apprehension. Its influence was confined to the schools, and it did, as a matter of fact, represent an improvement upon the theories condemned in the last councils, besides which great care was taken to clothe it in orthodox phraseology. It was not till long after the death of its author that it made such a stir in Alexandria.

Nevertheless, it appears that Lucian was included in the condemnation of Paul. The bishops Domnus, Timæus, and at first even Cyrillus, would not admit him to communion.[1] However, Cyrillus afterwards accepted Lucian's explanations, and restored the doctor both to communion and to his position in the priesthood.[2] It was as a priest of Antioch that Lucian was arrested in 312, and suffered martyrdom.

And, indeed, all or nearly all the heads of these various schools of thought laid down their lives for the faith; greatly as they differed from each other on

[1] Λουκιανὸς ἀποσυνάγωγος ἔμεινε τριῶν ἐπισκόπων πολυετεῖς χρόνους (Letter of Alexander of Alex. Theodoret, *H. E.* i. 4, c. 9).

[2] Arius, Eusebius, and the other disciples of Lucian would never have been promoted to the ecclesiastical dignities which they held in so many places, if it had been known that they were disciples of a school proscribed by the bishops of Antioch. Yet their relations with Lucian must have been after that condemnation, and they certainly took place before the persecution, so that they must have occurred during the episcopate of Cyrillus, who died in 301 or 302.

many points, here one spirit animated them. Bishop Peter of Alexandria, Pamphilus, Methodius, and Lucian himself, all sealed their attachment to the common faith of Christians with their blood; and all of them now enjoy in the Church the honour which is accorded to the martyrs. This does not, of course, imply that all their doctrines were equally correct, or that their individual errors mattered little to Christianity. But it shows at least that, whatever their theology, when the great trial came, they all acquitted themselves as brave men and convinced Christians.

CHAPTER XXV

CHRISTIAN PRACTICE

Preparation for Baptism. Catechumens. The Apostles' Creed. Canon of the New Testament. Apostolical romances. Encratism. Orthodox asceticism. The discipline of penance. Increase of worldliness. The Council of Elvira.

In some circles, these theological disputes undoubtedly made a stir, and on ecclesiastical literature they left deep traces, which we should have less difficulty in calling to life again, if they had not early been effaced by the quarrels of the following centuries. They did not, however, greatly affect the general body of Christians. The event most likely to have attracted attention, the deposition of the Bishop of Antioch, was, after all, only of local interest. After the condemnation of Paul of Samosata, events soon resumed their ordinary course.

And it is this ordinary routine of life that claims attention at this moment, on the eve of the last great persecution, and of the official triumph of Christianity. We will glance at Christian society in the 3rd century, and take account of its converts, its moral and religious life, its organization, and its government.

Tertullian says in his *Apology* (ch. xvii.), that a Christian is not so born, but that he becomes so: *fiunt, non nascuntur christiani.* This must not be taken literally. From the time of Septimius Severus, a number of the faithful were Christians by birth, because, their parents being Christians, they received baptism in their infancy, and contracted, without any personal knowledge of it, the

most solemn responsibility as to faith and morals. The Church had no hesitation in the matter, being firmly persuaded of the truth of her faith and her hopes, and convinced that, for the neophyte in the cradle, the education of the family would advantageously replace the long probation imposed upon adult converts.

For, indeed, adult converts were not admitted without being proved in the Catechumenate, an institution which, towards the end of the 2nd century, we hear of almost everywhere. Converts who embraced Christianity, after attaining years of discretion, were not allowed to join the general body of the faithful at once. Initiation was only granted at the end of a prescribed time, during which they learnt what was the real meaning of Christianity and its doctrines, and of the many obligations they proposed to take upon themselves. And not only did they learn, but they also began to live the Christian life. Thus they tried their strength, and the Church kept her eye upon them, and was able to judge if their perseverance might reasonably be reckoned on. The catechumens were already considered as Christians; they shared the name, and in time of persecution, they shared also the risks of the faithful. In the Christian assemblies they might take part in the singing, the reading of the Scriptures, and in certain of the prayers; but not in the celebration of the Mystery of the Eucharist and several other rites, such as initiation and ordination.

When the catechumens were sufficiently prepared, they might present themselves for baptism. This they usually did; but they were not obliged to receive it immediately, and some persons put off taking any definite engagement.

From the time of the apostles, the rite of initiation included two principal parts: the bath, or baptism with water, and the laying on of hands. The first rite conveyed the special gift of remission of sin; it was the symbol of the purification of the soul, by conversion and grafting into Jesus; the second rite carried with it sanctification by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the soul of the neophyte. As time went on, other

ceremonies were introduced. Tertullian speaks[1] not only of baptism and the laying on of hands, but also mentions unction, the consignation or imposition of the sign of the cross, and lastly, a mixture of milk and honey given the newly initiated to drink.[2] And as he adds that all these ceremonies were practised by the Marcionites, they must date back at least to the first half of the 2nd century.

Baptism was always preceded by a special course of preparation: it generally took place during the Feast of Easter; the weeks beforehand were employed in finishing the instruction of the catechumens, who were now no longer considered simple catechumens, but were called in Latin *competentes*, and φωτιζόμενοι in Greek. They learnt the rule of faith or Creed, and received instruction upon it.

At baptism they were required to renounce publicly, before the whole Christian assembly, Satan, his pomps, and his works, which meant, in fact, paganism,[3] its worship and its lax morality. Then they declared their faith in Jesus Christ, and in token thereof they recited a profession of faith.

The formula of the Creed was then, throughout the Church, that called the Apostles' Creed. The form used in our day differs but slightly from that already traditional in Rome at the beginning of the 3rd century:

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty;[4] and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Saviour, born[5] of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried,[6] rose again on the third day from the dead, ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost, the holy

[1] *De resurrect.* 8; *adv. Marc* i. 14; iii. 22.

[2] This last ceremony is no longer in use; the anointing with oil, and the sign of the cross, form with the imposition of hands the special ritual of Confirmation.

[3] This renunciation was only intended for neophytes who had been pagans. It is certain that converts from Judaism were not called upon to renounce Satan. This formula was not for them.

[4] The present version now adds here: "Maker of heaven and earth."

[5] "*Conceived by* the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, dead, and buried." [6] "Descended into Hell," *add.*

Church,[1] and the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the body."[2]

Tertullian was familiar with this form of the Creed, which, during the 3rd century, passed from one Church to another, and finally prevailed everywhere. It is characterized by division into three articles (which correspond to the three Divine Names of the baptismal formula), a short epitome of the whole Gospel history, contained in the second article; and by the mention, in the third, of the Church, of baptism (remission of sin), and of the resurrection. There are many reasons for the belief that this Roman Creed was drawn up long before the time when we first hear of it.

The first article shows no trace of any reference to the heresy of the Gnostics; God is there called simply Almighty, without its being thought necessary to point out that He was the Creator. It seems clear that this would have been otherwise if the religious authorities who drew up this formula had seen the Gnostic peril threatening. We need not, in fact, hesitate to place it as early as the first half of the 2nd century. Even earlier than that there must certainly have been brief summaries of the Christian preaching; we find traces of them in the letters of St Ignatius and in the pastoral epistles; but we have nothing to prove that they were either as complete as our old Roman formula, or arranged in the same way.[3]

The Christian faith as formulated in this brief and simple summary, which was intelligible to all, was sustained and defined by perpetual instruction, which chiefly took the shape of reading the Bible with homiletic commentaries. By the use of spiritual interpretation many Old Testament texts could be used for the instruction of the faithful, which otherwise hardly lent themselves to edification. In the beginning, the Church appears not to have discriminated much with regard to biblical literature. The

[1] "Catholic," *add.* [2] "The life everlasting," *add.*

[3] Upon this subject, see Harnack, *Chronologie*, vol. i., p. 524, and the works which he quotes and summarizes.

sacred books actually used in the synagogues were adopted wthout heeding the fact that all the synagogues had not the same sacred library. Hence arose variations and uncertainties. Soon, when the writings of the New Testament came to be added to those of the old Bible, these increased considerably. We have no certain knowledge of the details of this state of confusion. But very soon a process of elimination began ; the number of canonical gospels was fixed at four, and that of the epistles of St Paul at thirteen. A complete canon, a list of all the books received by the Church as sacred and canonical, appeared for the first time in Rome towards the end of the 2nd century. This is called the Muratorian Canon. To tell the truth, this document is rather enigmatical, as only the end of it exists, and it is still a disputed point whether it was written in Greek or in Latin ; it can, therefore, scarcely be considered an official document involving the responsibility of the Roman Church. But at least, it testifies to certainty reached on some points, and to other questions still undecided in Rome when it was written. It acknowledged as canonical the four gospels, the thirteen epistles of St Paul, the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles of St John and St Jude, and two Apocalypses, that of John and that of Peter. Strong opposition existed, however, to the admission of the latter. The Shepherd was mentioned, but was set aside as too recent. Its author could neither be included amongst the prophets,[1] nor amongst the apostles ; he had written at a time, still recent (*nuperrime*, *temporibus nostris*), when his brother Pius occupied the episcopal throne at Rome. Other writings, such as the epistles of St Paul to the Laodiceans and the Alexandrians, are classed as heretical, and resolutely set aside.[2]

Naturally the books of actual heretics were not read in the Christian assemblies. But, between such condemned

[1] This word is here to be taken in the sense of the prophets of the Old Testament.

[2] The Epistle of St James is not mentioned any more than those of St Peter ; but the text is doubtful, and possibly this omission, which is indefensible, especially as regards the First Epistle of Peter, did not occur in the original.

productions and the Holy Scriptures, there was a considerable margin of debatable ground, and here various compositions, less clearly defined in character, found a place; some were orthodox but of doubtful authenticity or imperfect authority, and others had suspicious tendencies which were not very pronounced. Here and there, thanks to men's simplicity, strange or even suspected books crept into use even in public worship. In other places they were only read privately. The curiosity of the little world of Christians led them to give too ready a welcome to gospels[1] which were not officially recognised, and especially to the pious romances about the apostles which claimed to be genuine history. Of these romances, one named "The Acts of Paul" seems to be the most ancient. It was certainly most uncalled for, the true history of St Paul being already well known, from the canonical book of the Acts. Quoted, however, by Hippolytus and Tertullian, and classed by Origen and Eusebius among the appendices of the New Testament, this extraordinary work found a place in some copies of the Bible. Even after it was compromised by the enthusiasm of the Manicheans and the Priscillianists, it still escaped more than partial proscription. That the charming episode of Paul and Thecla formed part of it is now an established fact; and also the apocryphal correspondence of St Paul with the Corinthians, as well as the account of the martyrdom of the apostle and the celebrated legend of the milk which flowed from his decapitated head. These fragments formed part of a vast whole,[2]

[1] Gospels of the Hebrews, of the Egyptians, of St Peter; see above, pp. 89, 122, 325, 351. The Gnostics possessed also gospels of Thomas, of Philip, of Mathias, etc.

[2] Besides these fragments just enumerated, and some of less length already known, we have now a Coptic version compiled with patient wisdom by Carl Schmidt, by means of about 2000 fragments of a papyrus manuscript in the library at Heidelberg. These fragments, unfortunately, are far from representing the entire original text, but Schmidt has arranged and restored them as far as possible, has translated them into German, and provided them with commentaries on all the questions arising. C. Schmidt, *Acta Pauli*, Leipzig, 1904.

in which were described the adventures, the preaching, and especially the miracles of St Paul, much in the style of the Acts of the Apostles. The characters also are much the same, but treated with incredible freedom. It is difficult to understand how such an account could have been offered to those acquainted with St Luke's. The author is much too fond of miracles; but the characteristic feature is his doctrine. It has nothing in common with Gnosticism, which it expressly repudiates and condemns. But continence is insisted upon with a pertinacity unknown in the usual teaching. It appears as if constituting the very essence of Christianity. "Blessed," says St Paul, "are those who keep their flesh pure, for they shall become the temple of God. Blessed are the continent (ἐγκρατεῖς), for God will speak to them. Blessed are those who renounce the world. . . . Blessed are those who, having wives, live as though they had no wife. . . . Blessed are the pure bodies of virgins, . . . etc." These principles are perpetually brought out in the narrative. War is waged for a particular moral code, of a severity unknown in the Gospel.

The "Acts of Paul" were composed, about the time of Marcus Aurelius, by a priest of Asia. Tertullian tells us that the religious authorities of the land did not appreciate this singular document, and that the author, although he put forward in defence his zeal for the Apostle Paul, was deprived of his priestly position. The book was not then actually suppressed; but we are glad to know that the Church did not recognize its own teaching in this bold distortion of facts, and this exaggerated moral code.

Still less was Church teaching expressed in other apostolic romances almost as ancient as the "Acts of Paul," but even more offensive. I mean the Acts of John, of Peter, of Andrew, and of Thomas,[1] which appear to have

[1] For the text of these writings consult the edition of Lipsius and Bonnet, *Acta apostolorum apocrypha*, which includes them all. The collection, published in 1851 by Tischendorf under the same title, is far surpassed by this new edition; as are also the *Acta Thomae* and the *Acta Andreae cum laudatione contexta*, published in 1883 and 1895

been in circulation from the first years of the 3rd century.[1] The first three, or at any rate the first two of these Acts, are closely connected; some critics attribute them to the same author, a certain Leucius or Leucius Charinus, who, according to others, composed only the Acts of John. This last book is absolutely heretical, being tainted with a most accentuated Docetism, with references to the Ogdoad, the Dodecad, and the Pleroma. The freedom of some of the stories verges on indecency. The Acts of Peter are less objectionable; the Docetism is there less marked. It was the same, as far as we can judge from a few fragments, with the Acts of Andrew. These writings all share a very marked tendency to asceticism—a horror of marriage and of wine. St Peter and St Andrew were put to death, they declare, because they commanded married women to refuse their husbands all conjugal rights. They forbid wine, even in the Eucharist, which is celebrated with bread and water alone.

The Acts of John, of Peter, and of Andrew, were written in Greek; they made use of various local traditions current in Asia, in Rome, and elsewhere. St Andrew, with St Peter and St Matthias, evangelizes the coasts of the Black Sea; his very fantastic adventures terminate with his martyrdom at Patras. The last episode of the history of St John is that of the "Metastasis," in which the aged apostle descends into the tomb without completely tasting death. The history of St Peter develops the account, already accepted in some circles, of the Roman controversy between St Peter and Simon Magus,[2]

by M. Bonnet. To the fragments of the "Acts of Peter," according to various Latin and Greek manuscripts, published in the first volume by Lipsius, must be added a Coptic fragment recently (1903) edited by C. Schmidt, in the *Texte und Unt.*, vol. xxiv.; *Die alten Petrusakten.* For the bibliography, see Bardenhewer (*Geschichte der altkristlichen Literatur*, vol. i., p. 414 *et seq.*).

[1] Origen himself was familiar with them; see Eusebius, *H. E.* iii 1.

[2] No attack is intended on Gnosticism in the person of its classical ancestor. In the "Acts of Peter," Simon is only represented as an ordinary magician, antagonistic to Christ and His apostles; but no special doctrine is attributed to him.

and also that of the crucifixion of the Apostle, head downwards.[1]

In the "Acts of Thomas" we take leave of the Greek world. This apostle carries the Gospel to India, and his legend was written at Edessa, in the Syriac tongue. But notwithstanding this different origin, the Acts of Thomas are inspired by much the same spirit as are the other apostolical romances. Asceticism is represented as being the very essence of religion. Here and there a Gnostic tendency is revealed, especially in some of the hymns which in our version have been less corrected than the rest of the text. It is exactly what was to be expected, from the Bardesanite atmosphere in which it probably originated.

Fragments only of these apocryphal histories have reached us. The original versions could never have been tolerated. In the 4th and 5th centuries, they were, in addition, compromised by the use the Manicheans and Priscillianists made of them. They were re-edited, the most shocking features suppressed, but all the marvellous adventures, in which the populace took delight, were preserved. From this process editions resulted which were almost orthodox, and whence, for many centuries, the hagiography of the apostles was derived.

In whatever form the Gnostic heresy in these writings may have been combined with orthodoxy, it is quite clear that they all have the same original trend towards the Encratite tendency, which condemned all sex relations, even in the marriage state, and the use of strong meats, flesh in any form, and wine. There is no question here of individual abstinence, but of a general rule for all: every Christian must be an ascetic, an absolutely chaste celibate,

[1] The account of the martyrdom of St Peter was afterwards detached from the rest of the story and developed, and provided with various topographical details it was attributed to Linus, the first successor of the Apostle. The same name was attached later on to the Passion of St Paul taken from the *Acta Pauli*.

an Encratite. This idea was not new: it had appeared in apostolic times. The First Epistle to Timothy condemns it energetically,[1] and from that time it was undoubtedly connected with unorthodox views of the Creator and Creation. In the 2nd century, these ideas found expression in various forms of Gnosticism and in the teaching of Marcion. This was far from being a recommendation for asceticism; but rather a reason for viewing it with suspicion, even when it seemed inoffensive. There may perhaps have been Encratites adhering to the orthodox faith; but they are very rarely spoken of without the revelation of some taint of heresy. St Dionysius of Corinth[2] appears to have been much troubled at this tendency. St Irenæus[3] connects the Encratites with Saturninus, with Marcion, and specially with Tatian, who must have taught them to doubt the salvation of Adam, and to believe in the æons. Clement of Alexandria quotes,[4] as one of their authorities, a certain Julius Cassianus, author of a treatise *περὶ ἐγκρατείας ἢ περὶ εὐνουχίας*. This Cassian was a teacher of Docetism, precisely as were Saturninus and Marcion. However, Hippolytus knew Encratites who, "with regard to God and to Christ, thought as the Church did"; he does not connect them with Tatian.[5]

We do not hear that the Encratites ever formed organized communities. There were undoubtedly small groups in which the Eucharist was celebrated and received, according to the ritual of the sect. Usually they mixed with other Christians, either orthodox or Gnostic. One of the martyrs of Lyons, Alcibiades, seems to have inclined for some time to the Encratite persuasion. It was, in reality, not so much a doctrine as a rule of life, which people carried out more or less strictly, and for various reasons. No doubt it is due to the influence of Encratism that in the 3rd century the custom obtained in some places, of celebrating the Eucharist with bread and water only. St Cyprian had to oppose it in Africa.[6] The

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 1-6.
[2] See pp. 190 and 316 of this volume.
[3] *Haer.* i. 28.
[4] *Strom.* iii. 91.
[5] *Philos.* viii. 20.
[6] Ep. lxiii.

Passion of the martyr Pionius of Smyrna (250), represents him as practising this custom.

In the 4th century there were still Encratites. St Epiphanius[1] notices them in the large towns, such as Rome and Antioch, and especially in Asia Minor on the borders of the tableland of Isauria, in the provinces of Cilicia, Isauria, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and devastated Phrygia. Some of them, known by the name of Apostolics or Apotactites, added to the original observances the practice of voluntary poverty. They all had a great respect for the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, and other such productions.

Although the doctrines of Encratism, the abstinence, that is to say, on principle, from certain kinds of food, and from all sexual relations, were proscribed, the Church nevertheless allowed exercises of mortification, such, for instance, as fasting, a practice inherited from Israel. Very early there were two days of "station" in each week, Wednesday and Friday. Hermas was familiar with them; and they are mentioned in the "Teaching of the Apostles." On those days, the chief meal was later, and the food was more scanty and less appetizing. At Easter a very rigorous fast was observed. Limited at first to one or two days, it finally spread to the whole week before the great festival. On particular occasions, the bishops invited their people to observe an extra fast. All these were public observances; but in private the faithful fasted when and as they wished.

Another form of orthodox asceticism was the practice of voluntary celibacy. This was, of course, never imposed upon anyone. But it was very early adopted in the Church as a perfectly free and supererogatory practice, by both men and women, whose decision was well known. These persons made a profession of virginity. In certain cases, as in that of Origen, they went too far; but such exaggerations were repudiated by the general feeling. Those who embraced a life of celibacy, whether men or women, did not seclude themselves from the world. They still lived

[1] *Haer.* 46, 47, 61.

with their families, and shared in the ordinary life of Christians. Monasteries are of later date. However, it was not possible but that there should be some special connection between persons attached to the same ideal view of practical life. The professed celibates, of both sexes, were well known to each other throughout the different cities and the different churches. They associated by preference with each other. Hence arose certain abuses. Sometimes virgins living, for one reason or another, away from their families, associated themselves with a protector of the same profession, but of a different sex, and aroused protests from ecclesiastical superiors.[1]

But apart from abuse, the sacrifice entailed by such a profession was highly honoured in Christian society, and even outside. The Christian Virgins were the glory of the Church.

But this orthodox and optional asceticism was only for the elect few. Ordinary Christians found the common moral code sufficiently difficult, and did not always live up to the Christian standards they were educated in, or which they had freely taken on themselves. When, in very early days, the Shepherd of Hermas preached repentance with so much originality, the situation exposed was not unusual. As years went on, the number of Christians increased. Acts of virtue were multiplied, and so were sins. Hence arose difficulties more and more pressing and varied. Casuistry was developed, and the institution of penance, which at first displayed only its essential features, soon grew more definite.

It was founded upon this very simple principle, that a society has the right to exclude those of its members who gravely break its laws. A Christian who broke the

[1] Upon this subject, besides the *Banquet of Virgins* by Methodius, see the pseudo-Clementine epistles, *Ad Virgines* (of both sexes). These fragments, of which we have a Syriac version, appear to have formed at first one and the same document. Possibly the name of Clement was only attached when it was divided into two letters. The place of its origin seems to have been Syria; and its date well on in the 3rd century; *cf.* Cyprian, Ep. iv.

promises of his baptism was banished from the Christian community; excommunicated. If, touched by repentance, he determined to change his ways, he could beg for readmission, and if his conversion appeared genuine, he was readmitted; but not as a regular member of the community: he was ranked among the penitents, a special class, similar to that of the catechumens. Like the latter, the penitents could only assist at the first part of Divine worship. Like the catechumens, they were subjected to a strict supervision, intended to test the reality of their repentance. Moreover, they had to submit to a system of expiation, proportioned to the gravity of their offence. If their faults had not been very serious, it might happen that at the end of a longer or shorter period they were entirely reconciled to the Church.[1] They then took their old place amongst the rest of the faithful. But there were cases, such as those of homicide, adultery, and apostasy, for which the time of expiation lasted until the death of the sinner. We have already seen that Pope Callistus relaxed this very severe rule, and allowed penitents guilty of sins of the flesh, to be reconciled before their last moments. The writings of Hippolytus and Tertullian expressed the opposition of the rigorists, but in practice the Roman view prevailed everywhere. With regard to intentional homicide and, above all, apostasy, the Church was less indulgent. When the persecutions were over, and there had been many apostasies, the Church accepted, as extenuating circumstances, the torments of the rack and the fire, exile, loss of possessions, imprisonment, and even fear, and a situation which otherwise would have become very complicated was compounded by a rapid expiatory penance. However, the old rule was maintained for those who, without any such extenuating circumstances, had been guilty of the sin of idolatry, especially in its most characteristic form, that of sacrifice.

[1] In certain countries, as we learn from the "canonical" Epistle of St Gregory Thaumaturgus, and other Oriental documents, there was a sort of classification of the penitents, distinguished by the names of Hearers (ἀκροώμενοι), Kneelers (ὑποπίπτοντες), and Bystanders (συστάντες).

For it was not only in time of persecution that Christians were tempted to compromise with paganism. Even when the magistrates left the faithful in peace, they still had to live in an atmosphere permeated by the old forms of religion. The claims of their family, their neighbourhood, or trade, might all involve them in lamentable concessions.[1] Certain professions were full of perils, such as that of a soldier, or a schoolmaster, a painter, or a sculptor. The longer the time of tranquillity lasted, the more complicated became the relations between the world and Christian society. Opinion on both sides became less bitter; the faithful gained confidence in the good will of the State, and the heathen were reassured as to the dangers of Christianity. Few positions were considered incompatible with Christianity, or even with the office of priest or bishop. St Cyprian[2] knew many (*plurimi*) bishops who accepted the management of property, who frequented fairs, practised usury,[3] and took proceedings in cases of eviction. We have seen that Paul of Samosata united the duties of Bishop of Antioch with those of a high postion in public finance; his adversary, Malchion, was director of the "Hellenic" school at Antioch, a most extraordinary position for a priest on duty. The mathematician Anatolius, head of the Aristotelian School at Alexandria, was raised to the episcopate. Towards the end of the 3rd century, the manager of the imperial manufactory of purple dye, established at Tyre, was a priest of Antioch. The imperial household, from the time of Nero to that of Diocletian, always included many Christians. Ultimately they accepted not only financial managerships, but also municipal and even provincial magistracies. What do I say? There were even believers in Christ who became flamens, that is, pagan priests. The government in later times became so obliging, that for a so-called Christian who accepted such offices, the religious

[1] The Council of Elvira, c. 57, speaks of Christian ladies who lent clothes to decorate the pagan processions.

[2] *De lapsis*, 6.

[3] Similar abuses are condemned in canons 19 and 20 of the Council of Elvira.

obligations attaching to them were relaxed. He could be high priest at the shrine of Rome and Augustus, without offering sacrifice to these official deities.[1]

This kind of toleration indeed verged on the absurd, from all points of view. The State, or municipality, which permitted Christian flamens to dispense with sacrificing was stultifying its own institutions. Better to have abolished them altogether. As to the Christians who consented to take up such priestly offices, they must have been Christians of peculiarly wide views. At the Council of Elvira, this state of things was censured, but the censure was in reality of a very mild type in spite of its apparent severity. They contented themselves with drawing attention to certain cases, and reproving grave abuses. It would, perhaps, have been better to condemn entirely, and without mercy, this serious defection from elementary Christian principles. But doubtless, at the end of the 3rd century, it was already too late for such puritanism.

The record of this Council, taken with certain pages in the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, enables us to appreciate the moral condition of Christianity on the eve of the last persecutions; but over and above that it is a document of great interest.[2] The ecclesiastical history of Spain, apart from vague traditions of the preaching of St Paul,[3] is scarcely represented in the early days, except by a few isolated facts relating to the Decian and Valerian persecutions. These have been mentioned before. At the Council of Elvira (*Illiberis*, Granada) the Spanish Church is revealed on a much ampler scale. Besides about twenty bishops,[4]

[1] There were among Christians, actors and gladiators, even light women and *lenones*. It is needless to say that such professions were not allowed by the ecclesiastical authorities.

[2] Upon this subject see my memoir "Le concile d'Elvire et les flamines chrétiens," in the *Mélanges Renier*, 1887, p. 159 *et seq.*

[3] As to the legends about St James, I have expressed my opinions on them in a memoir entitled "*St Jacques en Galice*," published in the *Annales du Midi*, vol. xii. (1900), p. 145.

[4] Those of Legio (Asturica), of Saragossa, of Emerita, of Ossonova (Faro), of Evora, of Acci (Guadix), Castulo, Mentesa, Urci, Toledo, Salavia, Eliocroca; of Cordova, Seville, Tucci, Ipagrum, Illiberis, Malaga.

a good number of churches were represented by priests. All the names preserved cannot be identified, but their number shows the spread of Christianity in Spain at that time, especially in the south.

The account of this Council also proves that, if among Iberian Christians worldliness had made lamentable progress, the heads of the Church had not lost sight of the ancient high ideals, and that they were not afraid to have recourse to the severest penalties in defence of morality. Seventeen of the eighty-one canons, promulgated by the Fathers assembled at Elvira, terminate with the severe formula: *nec in finem dandam esse communionem.* This is not to be interpreted to mean that the episcopate of Spain devoted to eternal damnation all the guilty persons included in this sentence, or even that the Church excluded them entirely from her fold. They were admitted to the inferior position occupied by penitents, but the Church refused to exercise for them her power of external and complete absolution, leaving the acceptance of their repentance to God.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

Mother-Churches and Daughter-Churches. First Metropolitan Sees. Development of the hierarchy. Administrative headquarters of the local Church. The Eucharist and the Agapé. Different classes of Christians: Confessors and virgins. The origin of clerical celibacy. Church discipline and the "apostolic" documents. The bishop and the episcopate. The universal authority of the Roman Church.

THE Christians, like the Jews, were grouped together in local communities, governed by a hierarchy, of which the three orders, bishops, priests, and deacons, existed, as has been seen, from apostolic times. It was quite essential that these local communities, these churches, should be mutually united; they considered themselves, in fact, members of one body, which included the whole of the faithful in Christ, and formed the Church—no longer local but universal—the Catholic Church.

Where, then, did the local Church begin and end? What principles determined its extent? An answer meeting every case is less easy to find than might be imagined. As a rule, when a Church was organized in the capital-city, its jurisdiction was identical with that of the city. But this was not the case everywhere. The Christians of Vienne, for instance, seem to have been at first very closely associated with those of Lyons. In Spain, in the middle of the 3rd century, the same bishop governed the faithful of *Leon* (Legio) and of *Astorga* (Asturica), and this combination continued many centuries. The

province of Scythia, which contained a considerable number of towns, had never any bishop except the Bishop of Tomi. That part of Thrace which borders on the Bosphorus, and formed, in the time of Diocletian, the province of Europe, had still, in 431, only four bishops, each ruling over the Christians in two cities. Until the beginning of the 3rd century, the Church of Alexandria was the only Episcopal Church in Egypt; and there are certain indications which lead us to believe that Rome held the same position in Italy, and Lyons in the Celtic province of Gaul. This does not, of course, imply that all the Christians in Egypt, in Italy, and in Celtic Gaul, were concentrated at Alexandria Rome, or Lyons. They were scattered throughout the whole country in more or less isolated groups, which only became autonomous and completely organized gradually. And even so, these Daughter-Churches did not attain a footing of perfect equality with their Mother-Church. Their dependence showed itself differently in different places. In some places the new foundation was not given so complete an organization as that of the Mother-Church. The bishop of the latter continued to be their bishop, and ruled them through an intermediary, some priest, or even a deacon. Elsewhere, in lands where there were few towns, and the branch churches were in large villages and other country places, their superintendents were called *Chorepiscopi*. At the Council of Elvira were present many priests from town districts which apparently never had a bishop. So also many *Chorepiscopi*, mostly from Syria or the eastern provinces of Asia Minor, took part in the Greek councils of the 4th century. Even where all the local churches, whether in large or small towns, had a complete hierarchy, in Southern Italy, for instance, in Africa, and in Egypt, their bishops were always more or less subordinate to the bishop of the Mother-Church whence they originated.

These relations resulted quite naturally in the organization of churches which were not simply local, but, in some sense, provincial.[1] This last term, however, must not be

[1] See my *Origines du culte chrétien*, 3rd ed., p. 13 *et seq.*

taken literally. For nowhere, before Diocletian, certainly not in the West, is there in the grouping of churches the least indication of a desire to reproduce the lines of the imperial province. The Bishop of Carthage, or at least his Council, presides over all the African provinces—Pro-consular, Numidian, and Mauritanian. Italy depends entirely on the See of Rome; the See of Alexandria is the ecclesiastical centre for both Egypt and Cyrenaica, although in civil affairs these countries were separately administered. Here, the connection between the churches had nothing to do with the lines of the civil administration, but arose solely out of the circumstances of their evangelization, which again depended on geographical conditions. In other places where the churches were almost on a par as to origin, their bishops were sometimes grouped around the senior in age or standing. In the time of Marcus Aurelius, Bishop Palmas of Amastris presided for this reason over the episcopate of one part of the province of Bithynia-Pontus. In the African provinces this custom was long maintained: and there, except in Pro-consular Africa, the metropolitan authority was never in the hands of the bishop of the civil centre.

On the other hand, that arrangement was adopted almost everywhere in the Grecian part of the empire, though only towards the end of the 3rd century, after Diocletian had rearranged the provincial districts. In each of the new provinces, the bishop of the capital became the head of the episcopal group, and the limits of the ecclesiastical province followed those of the imperial province. This was an innovation. The Council of Nicæa, it is true, confirmed the new arrangement; but it allowed certain exceptions which followed the old lines. In the West the new arrangement was not carried through without opposition, especially in Italy and Africa, where the ancient metropolitan rights of Rome and Carthage had to be respected.

But to return to the local churches. The primitive hierarchy had quickly become complicated by the addition of other offices to those of bishop, priest, and deacon, and

variations inevitably arose. In Rome, by the middle of the 3rd century, there were forty-six priests,[1] seven deacons, seven sub-deacons, forty-two acolytes, fifty-two inferior clergy, exorcists, readers, and doorkeepers.[2] The Christian population of the town was spread over seven regions. The number of regions seems to have been arranged to fit in with that of the deacons,[3] sub-deacons, and acolytes; each region having one deacon, one sub-deacon, and six acolytes, all employed in the organisation and administration of charity. More than fifteen hundred poor people were dependent on the community. As to the exorcists, readers, and doorkeepers, they assisted in the celebration of divine worship, and the preparation of candidates for baptism.

The centre of ecclesiastical administration, the actual place where the business of the Roman community was transacted, appears to have remained outside the city during the whole of the 3rd century. It moved, probably from the Via Appia, when Constantine installed it at the Lateran, and appears in primitive times to have been established on the Via Salaria. In the town itself, however, there were already a number of Christian centres.[4] It was the same in Alexandria, where fairly early, priests appear to have been attached to definite churches, and to have had more autonomy than in Rome.

Except in the great towns, there were usually only two centres, the cemetery and the church-house. The cemetery was a private burying-place, intended only for members of

[1] Letter of Cornelius, Eusebius vi. 43.

[2] The same offices, except that of doorkeeper, are mentioned about the same time, in the correspondence of St Cyprian as existing in Carthage.

[3] In other churches we hear also of seven deacons; no doubt a reminiscence of the seven "deacons" of Jerusalem (Counc. of Neo-Cæsarea, can. 15).

[4] We learn this from documents relating to the seizure of churches in 303. It is, however, quite impossible to be exact. The legends about some of these presbyteral churches of the 4th century place their origin very far back. But, though roughly speaking quite credible, these legends are not to be relied on for details.

the community. As for the church-house, it was the residence of the bishop, and provided him with an administrative centre, where also he put up Christian travellers, and frequently also sick persons. It was there also that in a large hall, approached by a cloistered court, the religious meetings were held. At the end, in an apse, sat the bishop, surrounded by the college of presbyters. A table or altar served for the celebration of the Eucharist, a platform (ambo) for the reading of the Scriptures, which then held a position of much importance in these assemblies.

The Eucharist was always the chief act of worship. In the beginning it was celebrated at the end of a corporate meal. This is what we call the Agapé. In the 2nd century,[1] the Agapé was already distinct from the Eucharist. It took place in the evening, while the Eucharist was celebrated at the morning meeting. A corporate meal, however frugal, was only suitable for restricted groups: as soon as the churches became crowded assemblies, it would be difficult to organize such banquets, so as to secure order and decorum. The Agapé was still kept up, but less as an expression of a real corporate life than as a memory of the past, and also as a work of charity; but soon no one went to it except the poor and the clergy, and the latter took part in it rather as part of their duty than for their own benefit. Its recurrence did not coincide with that of the ordinary liturgical service. The Agapé became more and more rare, and finally fell into disuse.[2]

In the general Christian community, the clergy already formed a pretty distinct class. There was, indeed, no other class except that of catechumens, who had not yet attained the position of initiated, and penitents, who had lost it. But the confessors, and those who led lives of voluntary

[1] See the celebrated description of the Agapé, by Tertullian, *Apolog.*, 39.

[2] The other kind of Agapé, a funeral feast, was quite another thing. It must be considered as a custom much older than Christianity, which the Church tolerated till abuses crept in. Even then, it was not easy to put an end to it.

celibacy, soon acquired a special position. We have already seen how coolly the confessors of Lyons and Africa treated their religious superiors. The fact that they had not denied Christ, and had suffered for the faith, entitled them to charitable assistance, to take part in ecclesiastical functions, and especially to public consideration. Of this they took an unfair advantage.[1] Those who made profession of celibacy, virgins especially, had a no less opinion of themselves: this, public opinion encouraged. In the Church special places were assigned them. The praise of their profession, in sermons and books, kept well within the bounds of orthodoxy; it was no longer inspired by dualistic theories, and all criticism of the creation was avoided. Nevertheless, the inevitable comparison between the profession of virginity, and the marriage state, easily led to discrediting the latter. And in this, the best intentioned people were tempted to go too far.

Such a state of things was not without danger to ecclesiastical discipline. By dint of being so much vaunted by others, and so self-satisfied, the confessors and virgins were forming an aristocracy in Christian society, which might be tempted to dispute with the hierarchy the right to govern the Church.[2] We shall see later how this situation developed, and how the difficulty was solved. Before the 4th century, it had already had one important result—clerical celibacy. Christian opinion had early become more or less exacting on this point, and the clergy felt that they must yield to it if they did not wish to endanger their own influence. And, indeed, from the moment it was admitted that celibacy represents a more perfect ideal than marriage, it was inevitable that men should expect the clergy to be taken from among those in the condition of higher perfection, and to persevere in that state.

[1] Beside the facts already quoted, see Canon 25 of the Council of Elvira.

[2] Already St Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad. Polyc.*, 5, had advised the unmarried not to plume themselves on their profession, or to set themselves above their bishops.

In Rome, at the time of Callistus and Hippolytus, the rigorists forbade the clergy to marry[1] under pain of deprivation. The Council of Elvira (*c.* 33) goes farther; it forbids all those clergy who had been married before ordination to live with their wives. This law was imposed in Rome, at the end of the 4th century, but only on bishops, priests, and deacons. What the official custom was before the Diocletian persecution, it is difficult to say exactly. In the East, also, the discipline actually now in force, and so long in existence, was only arrived at gradually. Contemporary documents show no custom as uniformly established at the period under discussion. In some places[2] the desire is expressed that the bishop should not be married, or should live with his wife like a brother, and that priests also should observe some restraint in these relationships. Elsewhere,[3] the ordination of celibates seems to be objected to. And finally there are places[4] where there seems no idea that the case of the clergy as to marriage was in any way different to that of ordinary Christians. These variations show plainly that the institution of enforced celibacy was still in its infancy.

But gradually the discipline of the Church became fixed. In the lapse of time, habits—whether received from the first founders, or introduced little by little as circumstances required—acquired in every Church the force of consecrated custom, of ecclesiastical rule. The customs of the great churches, the Mother-Churches, where the tradition went back farther, and the experience was more varied, were copied by the branch churches and the less important communities. These great churches, it is true, seem seldom to have taken the trouble to agree on a common usage,[5] but from this, no great want of uniformity resulted. Thanks to the frequency of their intercourse, and thanks also to the fact that the process of development in each sprang from the same principles, and took place

[1] Εἴ τις ἐν κλήρῳ ὢν γαμοιη (*Philosophumena* ix. 12).

[2] Ecclesiastical canons of the Holy Apostles.

[3] Canons of Hippolytus. [4] *Didascalia of the Apostles.*

[5] Hence arose incidents like the Paschal quarrel, and the disputes over the baptism of heretics.

under nearly the same conditions, the discipline established everywhere was perceptibly uniform.

The ecclesiastical authorities were in no hurry to codify Church law. At the Council of Nicæa, and long afterwards, there is a talk of rules and canons; these terms can scarcely mean anything but a commonly accepted tradition, without distinct definition. However, before the 4th century, little books appeared in which were collected and classified, not only general principles of Christian morality, but a certain number of disciplinary rules on the hierarchy, public worship, and Church discipline. These little codes, anonymous to us, were generally placed under the patronage of the apostles. We have already met with one very ancient book of this sort called the *Teaching* (Διδαχή) *of the Apostles*. To the 3rd century belong, apparently, the *Ecclesiastical Canons of the Holy Apostles*,[1] the *Didascalia of the Apostles*,[2] and the *Canons of Hippolytus*.[3] This last compilation seems to have had

[1] This compilation is presented under various titles: "Precepts by Clement" (Διαταγαὶ αἱ διὰ Κλήμεντος), "Ecclesiastical Canons of the Holy Apostles," *Duae Viae vel Judicium secundum Petrum*. We have still the original Greek text of it, which has often been published. See especially Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testamentum extra canonem receptum*, fasc. 4.

[2] The Didascalia was at first only known through a Syriac version, published in 1855 by P. de Lagarde (*alias* P. Bötticher). Fragments of a Latin version have been recently discovered at Verona by Hauler, who has begun to publish them: *Didascaliae apostolorum fragmenta Veronensia latina*, Leipzig, 1900; a French version of the Syriac, published by F. Nau, *Le Canoniste contemporain*, 1901-2. A German version with commentaries by Achelis and Flemming, in the *Texte und Unt.*, vol. xxv. (1904). Later, it formed the nucleus of a similar compilation, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the six first books of which are only an amplified repetition of *The Didascalia of the Apostles*.

[3] With regard to the *Canones Hippolyti*, see the edition of Achelis in the *Texte und Unt.*, vol. vi., 1891; I have added a reproduction of it to the last editions of my *Origines du culte chrétien*. The original Greek version is lost; we only have an Arabic version made from a Coptic recension. The Latin translation has been made from the Arabic. In his important work, *Die Apostolischen Konstitutionem*, Rottenburg, 1891, Funk, whose patient labours and authority in such matters are known to all, gives too late a date, I think, to the Canons of Hippolytus; he places them in the 5th century.

links with Rome; the Ecclesiastical Canons seem to have originated in Egypt; and the Didascalia carries us to Syria. We must be careful not to consider these collections as the absolutely exact expression of a discipline actually in force, though no doubt what the authors had under observation had considerably affected them; but we have no guarantee that what they saw was not amplified here and there to suit private wishes and sentiments. These little books gave expression to the universally prevalent notion that everything which the Church possessed, in the way of good traditions and useful institutions, was derived from the apostles. This same feeling, in different shapes, is met with in all the Christian writers who are drawn to reflect upon the constitution of the Church. In the 3rd century, no more is heard of inspired persons, prophets, and itinerent teachers. After the defeat of Montanism and Gnosticism, the hierarchy was practically everything. It was through her bishops that the Church was united to the apostles; they represented tradition and authority; and they alone were qualified to interpret doctrine, and to guide the faithful.

This position was well expressed in the local hierarchy. The choice of his own people, and the consecration bestowed either by the Mother-Church, or by neighbouring bishops, having installed him in due form, the bishop became at once the indisputable head of his Church. The faithful had only to follow him to be sure of walking in the right way.

But, as above the local Church there was the universal Church, so above the bishop there was the episcopate. It took time, however, to give a tangible expression to this idea. It was not until the reign of Constantine that the Church introduced the Œcumenical Council, an institution which, it must be acknowledged, was never very workable, and never succeeded in taking a place among the regular organs of Church life.

The episcopate was—with regard to current necessities—the group of neighbouring bishops, or the supreme bishop, if there was one in the country. Thus, for the election and

consecration of bishops, recourse was had to the heads of the nearest churches; if it was a question of Italy or Egypt, the Bishop of Rome, or the Bishop of Alexandria was appealed to. In some places all the bishops of a vast district assembled at councils held regularly once or twice a year. Thus united, the episcopate of that region arranged disputes, legislated on new points, and, if necessary, took disciplinary measures against any of their members who had strayed from the path.

But above these provincial organisations, there was, to speak the truth, nothing but a very strong feeling of Christian unity, and the special authority of the Church of Rome.

This was felt, rather than defined: it was felt first of all by the Romans themselves, who, from the time of St Clement, never had any hesitation as to their duty towards all Christendom; it was felt also by the rest of the world, so long as the expression of it did not conflict with some contrary idea, determined by circumstances (*préoccupation de circonstance*). In the exercise of her moral authority, an exercise which no one could have defined, the Roman Church was led sometimes to support men and sometimes to cross them. As long as she did not cross them, there were no expressions sufficiently strong to express their enthusiasm and respect, and even the obedience they felt incumbent upon them. In the event of conflicting opinion, as apparently, in the times of popes Victor and Stephen, men did not consider the prerogatives of the See of Peter so self-evident. But in the ordinary course of events, the great Christian community of the Metropolis of the world, founded at the very origin of the Church, consecrated by the presence and the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, kept its old place as the common centre of Christianity, and, if we may so express it, as the business centre of the Gospel. The pious curiosity of all the faithful, and of their pastors, turned incessantly towards the Church in Rome. Everywhere people wanted to know what was being done and taught there; if necessary they found their way there. The

founders of new religious movements tried to ingratiate themselves there, and even to get hold of the œcumenical authority by slipping in among the leaders. The charity of the Romans, kept up by a wealth already considerable, reached in times of persecution, or ordinary calamity, to the most distant provinces, such as Cappadocia and Arabia. Rome kept an eye on the doctrinal disputes which agitated other countries; it knew how to bring Origen to book for the eccentricities of his exegesis, and how to recall the powerful Primate of Egypt to orthodoxy. The situation was so clear that even the pagans were fully conscious of it. Between two candidates for the episcopal See of Antioch, the Emperor Aurelian saw at once that the right one was he who was in communion with the Bishop of Rome.

And yet, once more, these relations were insufficiently defined. The fast approaching day, when centrifugal forces come into play, will bring regret that the organization of the Universal Church was not developed so far as that of the local churches. Unity will suffer.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE REACTION AGAINST CHRISTIANITY AT THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY

General decay of pagan worship. Religion of Mithras. *The Magna Mater* and the Taurobolium. Aurelian and the worship of the Sun. Neo-Platonism. Plotinus. Porphyry and his book against the Christians. Mani and Manichæism. The end of the Gnostic sects. Rabbinical Judaism.

As in other things, so in religion, the 3rd century in the Roman world was a time of crisis. After the long peace and the brilliant prosperity of the Antonines, the empire was again to suffer from civil wars, half-mad or ephemeral princes, political assassinations and military revolutions. To crown all, the frontiers gave way on all sides, the provinces were invaded, and Eastern and Northern barbarians spread everywhere. At times the intervention of a strong hand restored order, but never for long. And at every such pause the decadence, the loss of strength, and the general dislocation of the Roman Empire were apparent. Then, from the sadness of earth, men's eyes were raised to heaven, for no one now thought of treating the gods lightly, and even philosophers became religious. But heaven was full of enigmas. The old gods of Greece and Rome lived only in the books of mythology; their neglected worship was fast falling into disuse, except of course in the country places, always conservative. The religion of Rome and Augustus had nothing serious about it save the public games for which it formed a pretext. The gods of the East still held their ground.

Isis and Serapis were not without worshippers. And still greater numbers flocked to the shrines of the Syrian gods; the Jupiter of Doliche in Commagene, the Syrian goddess of Hierapolis, the famous god of Emesa, and the god of Heliopolis (Baalbeck) still maintained their popularity. But the most popular of all these foreign gods was the Persian Mithras, who now demands attention.

1. *The Worship of Mithras.*[1]

The great national god of the Persians was the god of heaven, Ahura-Mazda (Ormuzd). With him was adored Mithras, the god of light, Anahita, the goddess of the earth, and divers others. The liturgy of this religion consisted of sacrifices, libations, and prayers before a perpetual fire. Before the Zoroastrian reformation it was very simple; then it was complicated by the elaborate ritual to which the Avesta bears witness.

The Persian Empire, in extending westwards, propagated this cult. One of its first halting-places was Babylon, where star-worship and magic were already of ancient date. There the religion of Mithras picked up various foreign elements, which it assimilated as it could, and then passed on to the eastern regions of Asia Minor, Armenia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and Cilicia. Here it took deep root, without, however, entirely supplanting the old faiths. At the end of the 4th century, there were few places in Cappadocia where the Magians, with their strange rites and their sacred fires, were not found. So St Basil tells us;[2] and Theodore of Mopsuestia, later still, thought it necessary to overwhelm them with a formal treatise.[3]

If Mithridates, who had control of the military force of those lands, had prevailed against Rome, probably the Persian religion, or, at any rate, the worship of the god whose name he bore, would have extended far west. This

[1] The principal authority upon the worship of Mithras is M. Franz Cumont's book, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs au culte de Mithra*, 2 vols. in 4to, Brussels, 1896-1899.

[2] Ep. 258, *ad Epiph.*

[3] Περὶ τῆς ἐν Περσίδι μαγικῆς, analysed by Photius, cod. 81.

was not to be. Nevertheless Ormuzd and Mithras still held their own in the countries where they had obtained a footing. For long the Romans left these lands in the hands of their native princes, without attempting to alter their political or religious institutions. In the end, however, the change came. Towards the end of the 1st century of our era, Rome annexed Asia Minor as far as the Euphrates. Provincial government was introduced, the country received Roman officials, and the Roman army took possession.

From this moment, the diffusion of Mazdeism began, in the empire, under the form known as the Mithraic cult. Many soldiers were either enlisted from Pontus or Cappadocia, or were quartered there for a long time. The traffic in slaves brought in to the empire, and especially to Rome, many natives of those provinces, who made their way in the different departments of the administration. Thus introduced, the religion of Mithras spread with astonishing rapidity, all along the Roman frontier, from the mouth of the Danube to that of the Rhine, and even as far as distant Britain. It was early known in the neighbourhood of the legions quartered in Spain, and also in Africa, as well as in Rome, and in several parts of Italy. In Greece, however, on either side of the Ægean Sea, the native gods held their own against their Persian rivals. And so it was in Syria and in Egypt.

The Mithraic cult was practised by confraternities, and celebrated in subterranean caves, in the depths of which was a sculptured representation of Mithras killing the bull. The god, in Persian dress, stands out against the background of a cavern, hewn in the living rock, a symbol of the firmament whence shines forth the celestial light.[1] He holds beneath him a bull, which he stabs in the shoulder, a symbolic sacrifice, representing, according to legend, the creation of the world. These mysteries, with many others, were revealed by degrees to the initiates. They were divided into seven classes, each having its own name: there were the Crows, the Occults (*cryphii*), the Soldiers, the Lions, the Persians, the Couriers of the Sun,

[1] Hence was derived the current formula: Θεὸς ἐκ πέτρας.

and the Fathers. The head of the Fathers was called the *Pater Patrum.* The transit from one class to another involved many quaint ceremonies, not unlike those of our freemasons.

To judge from the size of their sanctuaries, the number of initiates in each group must have been small. But then there were many groups. In Rome alone, about sixty Mithraic chapels are known. This form of worship, no doubt on account of its popularity with the soldiers, was in good repute with the emperors. In the 3rd century, the imperial government tended more and more to adopt, in principle and form, the traditions of the absolute monarchies of the East, and then all Persian customs were fashionable at the Court, in religion, as in all else. And Mithras was very accommodating; his religion in no way excluded any other cult.

The paucity of documents makes it difficult to define wherein Mithraism, as imported from Asia Minor, differed from the little known primitive religion of Persia, or from Zoroastrianism, as shown in the Avesta. In Babylon it had already undergone modifications, and it could not but be influenced by Hellenic polytheism. Many of the Persian gods had been identified with those of Greece: Ormuzd was recognized in Zeus, also god of heaven; Anahita was discovered to be closely related to Venus or to Cybele; and so on.[1] Mithras himself was found to be personified or represented by the deified Sun, and this identification stood the cult in good stead in the 3rd century, when, owing to various influences, sun-worship acquired great importance.

The connection established between Mithraism and the old official worship of the *Magna Mater* was of considerable importance. In the sanctuaries of Mithras, there was no place for women. The religion of Mithras was a religion for men, a religion for warriors, organized under the command of a god, to wage perpetual war against the spirits

[1] Even Saturn, the precursor and father of Zeus, had his equivalent in Zervan, or Time personified, who seems to have been added to the Iranian Pantheon in Babylon.

of evil. The ceremonies of the Phrygian goddess, however, might be attended by women. And on that plea women gained admittance to the Persian cult.

The horrible rite of the Taurobolium, the bath of blood, appertained to the worship of Cybele. Those who submitted to it descended into a pit covered in by a wooden lattice-work, on which a bull was sacrificed. The victim's warm blood, as it streamed down over the head and body of the initiate, was supposed to purify from all moral stain.

An alliance with such forms of worship might make Mazdeism attractive to those swayed by the gross rites of oriental paganism, but all who were repelled by horrors, and those who were being drawn, whether consciously or not, towards Monotheism and pure religion, must certainly have been alienated. In itself, however, the religion of Mithras contained elements—in theology, morality, ritual, and in its doctrine of the end of all things—bearing a strange resemblance to Christianity. The Christians themselves perceived this.[1] As mediator between the world and the Supreme Divinity, as creator, and, in a certain sense, as redeemer of mankind, the advocate of all moral good, and the adversary of all the powers of evil, Mithras certainly does present some analogy with the Logos, the creator and the friend of Man. The followers of Mithras, like the disciples of Christ, held the soul to be immortal, and that the body would rise again. Closely united to each other by a common religious bond, the Mithraites entered their confraternity by a baptismal rite; other ceremonies of theirs closely resembled confirmation and communion. Both religions observed the Sunday, the Day of the Sun. December 25, *natale Solis invicti*, was a feast-day to the followers of Mithras,[2] as it became to the Christians. Mithraism had its ascetics, of both sexes, like the Christian Church.

[1] See especially Justin, *Apol.* i. 66, and Tertullian, *De baptismo*, 5; *de Corona* 15; *Praesc.* 40.

[2] Still the *Sol invictus* was not peculiar to the Mithraists; other religious confraternities also venerated it.

But Mithraism had no equivalent for the Bible, nor for Jesus Christ. The Avesta did not belong to it. Mithras, the mythical god, the personification of one of the elements of the material world, had no footing on earth. The most subtle interpretation can find no more in him than in the Greek gods, Apollo, Zeus, and the others. No doubt behind Mithras was Ormuzd, whose pantheon can be reduced to Monotheism. But this does not really differentiate his from the Greek pantheon. Leaving on one side the Jews or Christians, who had other reasons for not accepting the Mithraic cult, the pagans themselves must finally have discerned that, taking one set of gods with another, it was better not to traffic with the strange deities of barbarians and other enemies of the empire, but to adhere to those of their ancestors. This was what the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Syrians did. In the military stations of the Rhine, the Danube, and the Atlas, the Mithraic movement certainly met with great success, during the 2nd century of our era; but simply because there it encountered no religious opposition. When Christian missions spread to these parts, Mazdeism soon began to decline. In Rome, Mithras and Cybele clung to life till the very end. They were the last to go down before the attacks of the conquering faith. In 390, the sacrifice of the Taurobolium was celebrated close to the Vatican, at the very doors of the basilica of St Peter.

The worship of Mithras was, in fact, sun-worship; it had that in common with the cults of Syria. And together they represented all that, in the ordinary pantheon, still retained a spark of life. This was no doubt why the Empress Julia Domna and her learned friends attempted, directly or indirectly, to foster the religion of the Sun, regarded as the most natural symbol of divinity.

This idea was revived by the Emperor Aurelian, as soon as he had succeeded in pacifying the empire at home, and in restoring his frontiers. Needless to say, he did not attempt to close the temples of Jupiter or Vesta;

but he founded by their side a new sanctuary of the Sun, and its magnificent buildings soon arose upon the Campus Martius, to the east of the Via Flaminia; a whole college of priests was appointed for its service, with the same privileges as the ancient corporation of the priestesses of Vesta. The emperor apparently intended the gods of Numa and the Tarquins to die of old age, and wished to give official sanction to those religious aspirations which seemed to draw men towards the Supreme Divinity, symbolized by the great luminary of the sky. Did he hope thus to stop the progress of Christianity? Everything points to it; for the founder of the temple of the Sun lost no time in persecuting the Church, and if death had not stopped him, his new god would have made many victims.

After he was gone, the worship of the Sun was still officially maintained; but it does not seem to have had much influence on the course of events.

2. *Neo-Platonism.*

Neo-Platonism represents a far more serious movement. In the time of the Severi, the founder of this movement, Ammonius Saccas, was teaching in Alexandria. A select, but very varied audience resorted to his lectures. Among them were Christians like Heraclas and Origen. Longinus, the celebrated rhetorician, also belonged to this School, together with another Origen and a certain Herennius; but the most famous of all the disciples of Ammonius was Plotinus. A native of Lycopolis, in Upper Egypt, Plotinus began to attend the lectures of Ammonius about the time (232) that Origen left Alexandria to settle in Palestine. After the death of his master in 243, Plotinus took part in the expedition of the Emperor Gordian against the Persians; he wished to study their wisdom and learning, and also that of India. The expedition failed; and Plotinus returning from the East settled in Rome, where he was soon surrounded by a group of disciples. We hear of a Tuscan, Gentilianus Amelius; of a native of Palestine, Paulinus; of a poet, Zoticus; a physician, Zethos, who came from

Arabia; of Castricius, on whose estate, near Minturnae, the master usually spent the summer; and finally, of the celebrated Porphyry, born at Tyre, who became the biographer and editor of Plotinus. The senators came to hear him; the Emperor Gallienus himself, with his wife Salonina, sometimes appeared amongst his audience. They promised to support the establishment in the Campagna of a colony, where life should be regulated by the rules of Platonism. But the project came to nothing, and Plotinus died in 270. He was a philosopher who lived up to his principles, austere in his life, and contemptuous of the world and literature. His disciples venerated him as a saint. His lessons usually took the form of conversation, without any attempt at elegance of style, and when rather late (about 263) he began to write, it was without regard to style or orthography. He wrote, moreover, only in detached fragments. Porphyry, one of his latest disciples, was charged by him to collect and publish these. This collection is called the *Enneades*,[1] and Porphyry prefaced it with the life of his master.

There we learn, amongst other things, that Christians, and especially Gnostic Christians, sometimes frequented the School of Plotinus. His philosophy, however, was too religious in the "Hellenist" direction for sincere and orthodox Christians to feel at home with him. With Gnostics, the way was freer; they met in transcendental theology. The Gnostic admirers of Plotinus seem to have been neither Valentinians nor Basilidians, but representatives of some Syrian system, a distant offshoot of Simon and Saturninus.[2] Their leaders were named Adelphius and Aquilinus.

[1] There were fifty-four treatises; Porphyry collected them in groups of nine, and made them into the six books of the *Enneades*.

[2] For this, see the memoir by Carl Schmidt, *Plotinus Stellung zum Gnosticismus und kirchlichen Christenthum*, in the *Texte und Unt.*, vol. xx. (4). One of the most honoured masters of the Neo-Platonic School, the Pythagorian Numenius, described Plato as an "Attic Moses"; Amelius, another disciple of Plotinus, quotes with approval the beginning of the Gospel of St John (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* ix. 6; xi. 18, 19).

Ammonius and Plotinus, like the Gnostics, had a synthetic system which, although at first taught with some mystery, soon became much the fashion. Thanks to Neo-Platonism, Hellenism could at last boast of a theology. No doubt some elements in it were old: Pythagorus, Zeno, Aristotle, and Plato, Plato especially, were all looked up to in the school as spiritual forefathers Their books formed a sort of Bible, a sacred text, a theme for commentators. Philo, although his name was not used, no doubt contributed some elements to the new system, which indeed has some very characteristic features in common with that of the old Jewish master.

It speaks of three constituent elements in the Divine nature, emanating one from the other, and passing down from the abstract to the concrete, from the simple to the composite, and from absolute perfection to varying degrees of imperfection. Behind all, is absolute essential Being, without determinateness or properties, ineffable and inaccessible to thought. It is the first single cause of all being in others; and thus, all other beings are It, and It is the whole being of every being. In the second degree comes Intelligence (*νοῦς*), which is also the Intelligible, an image of the Supreme Being, capable of being known, but of an absolute unity. This is the prototype of all other beings. Last comes the Soul (*ψυχή*), which emanates from the Intelligence as the Intelligence emanates from absolute essential Being. The Soul animates the world; it must, therefore, be capable of diversity; it includes individual souls. The visible world proceeds from it; and some only of these souls are attached to individual bodies. But unfortunately harmony does not reign amongst the elements of the world; and the soul does not fully control the body. Hence follows disorder.

Being, having become more and more imperfect by becoming concrete and diversified, must be brought back to perfection. This effort to return begins with virtue; at first social, civic virtue (*πολιτική*), which adorns the soul but is not sufficient to deliver it; then asceticism, or purifying virtue, which brings it back to goodness. Thus purified,

the soul is able to attain to the sphere of the Intelligence (νοῦς) by the exercise of reason. As to absolute essential Being, as reason does not reach it, no one can be in touch with it except through ecstasy. This can be cultivated; and when ecstasy results, the soul sees God. But this is rare. Plotinus, during the six years that Porphyry was with him, only attained four times to this immediate communion with the Supreme Being. And Porphyry himself only reached it once in his whole life.

Religion breathes through all this system; but it is not apparent, at first, how it could be harmonized with polytheism, or with Hellenic worship. Plotinus, who was tenacious of the religious side of his philosophy, found a way out of the difficulty. The True God, the only True God, must always remain absolute Being; but *Nous* is already a second god; and the ideas (λόγοι) which He includes are also divine beings; as are the constellations, and so on. And thus for the common people, the old Pantheon remained, but one or two higher storeys were built upon it. This symbolical interpretation was applied to mythology, to worship, to idols, to divination, and even to magic.

This baser part, this compromise with the ideas and practices of the old religion, must have grown up after Plotinus. Jamblicus, in the beginning of the 4th century, transformed the whole into a theurgic system. And in this form Julian received it.

Taken as a whole, Neo-Platonism represents the last effort of Greek philosophy to explain the mystery of the world, and this effort was deeply religious, not only because it adapted itself to traditional religion, but also because of the mysticism at its root. What Philo, three centuries before, had accomplished for Judaism, Plotinus did for Hellenism. Philo had shown that it was possible to be, at the same time, a Jew and a philosopher. Plotinus brought the old Greek philosophy into touch with mysticism; he reconciled it to some extent with religion, and at the same time he enabled religion to stand well with thoughtful men.

The thoughtful gladly welcomed the new system. To many no doubt it appeared a convenient rival to Christianity. But this pagan Gnosticism was in reality better calculated to cut the ground from under the feet of Gnostic Christianity than to be any serious menace to the orthodox Church. The God of Plotinus was too far from man, and too difficult of access; for evangelistic purposes the writings of ancient and modern philosophers could not be compared with Bible history, nor the many lives of Plotinus with the Gospels. Platonism remained the luxury of the few. The Church scarcely noticed it, but continued to inveigh against the idols and sacrifices of paganism without troubling as to the philosophy which might lie behind them. However, all Plotinus' ideas were not rejected; Christian thinkers of the 4th century and later, often made good use of them. If the new philosophy decided Julian, with his weak convictions, to throw over Christianity, it had quite the opposite effect on St Augustine, and through him, and through the Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite, the theology of the Middle Ages was widely influenced by neo-platonism.

But to return to early days. Before the death of Plotinus, Porphyry, on account of his health, had retired to Lilybæum, in Sicily. There, he compiled the *Enneades*, and wrote his fifteen books against the Christians, the most important weapon devised by the ancients against Christianity. From every point of view, Christianity had made much progress since the time of Celsus, and most especially in philosophy. It had produced Origen. Porphyry had known that great Christian teacher, and knew his writings. He knew also that the *First Principles* but imperfectly represented the doctrine of the Church. The doctrines of Creation and of the End of all things, of the Incarnation, and the Resurrection, as understood in the main Church, did not square with the Pantheism of the new School. And the sacred books of the Old and New Testament were always there to give a handle to the Greek spirit of criticism. At the request of his master, Porphyry had tried his hand against certain books of visions, attributed to Zoroaster, which the Gnostics made much use of in their discussions. Now he

attacked the Christian books. Of this work only fragments remain. Suppressed by the Christian emperors, these writings of Porphyry disappeared; and, strange to say, so did also the refutations by Methodius, Eusebius, Apollinaris, and Philostorgius. In the *Apocritica* of Macarius Magnes, a few pages have, however, been preserved, taken by him either direct from Porphyry, or from some intermediate plagiarist. The little which remains gives an idea of the close and pitiless criticism of the disciple of Plotinus. He does not condemn everything. He does not find fault with Christ, for whom he had, on the contrary, profound respect,[1] but with the evangelists, and, above all, with St Paul, for whom he has a special antipathy. He sees clearly where Christianity might be harmonized with Hellenic wisdom, on such points, for instance, as Divine Unity, the Monarchy of God, the likeness of the angels to inferior deities, and the use of temples and churches.

The book of Porphyry had a great vogue. It had to be refuted at once. This task was undertaken by Methodius, the learned Bishop of Olympus in Lycia, and the hard-working Eusebius of Cæsarea. But they did not hinder the success of Porphyry's book, and as long as there remained learned heathen, it was used as a weapon against Christianity.

Porphyry's career was long. He wrote many half philosophical, and half religious books, and died only in 304. By that time his adversaries, the Christians, were treated as enemies by the government, and attacked by other weapons than his.[2]

[1] Eusebius, *Dem. evang.* iii. 7; *cf.* Aug. *De civ. Dei.* xix. 23.

[2] After all Porphyry left a distinguished reputation, even among ecclesiastical writers; with them he was not popular, and with good reason. St Jerome has heaped on him all the abuse at his disposal, and that is saying a good deal; he calls Porphyry impudent, foolish, a sycophant, a calumniator, a mad dog, etc. St Augustine speaks of him quite differently (*De civ. Dei.* xix. 22, 23). Porphyry's Introduction (*Isagoge*) to the categories of Aristotle was, in the Middle Ages, a classic manual.

3. *Manichæism.*

By the end of the 3rd century, all the old religions seemed bound together against the steadily increasing progress of Christianity. All that Roman Asia had produced of strange cults and mysteries, rallied around Mithras, the Sun, and Cybele, and the mythology and philosophy of Hellenism supported each other against the common foe. As if that were not enough, a new religion now came from Persia. From old Babylon in its last days there sprang a new and vigorous growth—Manichæism.[1]

Mâni,[2] the founder of this movement, was born near Ctesiphon, the winter residence of the Parthian kings, in 215-16. His father, Fâtak-Bâbak, was a native of Ecbatana in Media (Hamadan); his mother belonged to the then

[1] For the origin of Manichæism and its doctrines, the best authority is the *Fihrist*, an Arabic work by Aboulfaragas, which was finished at Bagdad in 988 (ed. of Flügel, Leipzig, 1871); it contains many quotations from the Manichæan books of the early ages. Other Arabic or Persian writers, after him, get their information in the same way. Aphraates (hom. 2) and St Ephrem alluded to Manichæism; but the most important Syriac author is Theodore Bar-Choni (9th century), who also reproduced the original Manichæan texts. See his book entitled *Eskolion*, in Pognon, *Inscriptions mandaïtes*, Paris, 1899. Eusebius (*H. E.* vii. 31) only speaks once of Manichæism. The later authors, Greek and Latin, almost always rely upon the Acts of Archelaus, a fictitious dialogue, composed in Syriac by a clerk of Edessa, about 320, and afterwards translated into Greek, and from Greek into Latin. The Anti-Manichæan works of St Augustine have a special value, as for nine years he belonged to the Manichæan sect, only indeed, as a hearer or catechumen, who was not trusted with all the secrets; he was very well informed, however, on most points. We must remember also that African Manichæism, by the end of the 4th century, must have assimilated many Christian elements, which were foreign to its first constitution. The best commentaries are those of Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften* (1862); Kessler, *Untersuchungen zur Genesis des manichaeische Religionssystems* (1876), and his article *Mani*, in the *Encyclopædia* of Hauck.

[2] The Greek form is Μάνης; in Latin sometimes also *Manichaeus*: it is the form used by St Augustine. The resemblance of Μάνης with μανείς, a madman, has naturally been made the most of by controversialists.

reigning family of the Arsacides. Fâtak (Πατέκιος) was early converted to the religious views of the Mugtasila, a baptizing sect on the Lower Euphrates, resembling the present-day Mandaïtes; he went to live amongst them, taking with him his son. To Mâni, at the age of twelve, came a revelation of his doctrine, but he did not declare it till much later. He preached first in the royal palace, during the festivities in honour of the coronation of Sapor I. (242 A.D.).

Mâni gave himself out distinctly as being charged with a mission to men from the True God, as Buddha had been in India, Zoroaster in Persia, and Jesus in the West. His success was not great. The Mazdean clergy would not hear of a reform which threatened the Zoroastrian religion. As for King Sapor, he was so unsympathetic that Mâni had to go into exile. He lived for many years in lands to the north and east of the Persian Empire. His religion spread rapidly, either by his own efforts or those of his disciples, in Khorassan, in Touran (Turkestan), in China, and India; it even found many adherents in the heart of Persia.

Returning to Ctesiphon, after thirty years of exile, he succeeded in winning over Peroz, the brother of Sapor, who arranged an interview for him with the sovereign. Sapor promised toleration to his communities, and even gave hopes of his own conversion. The influence of the priests of the Sacred Fire, led, however, to a reaction. Mâni was imprisoned. The death of Sapor (272) set him free, for the short time that Hormizd reigned, but he was again arrested by King Bâhram. In 276-77 the prophet was crucified at Gundesapore, near Susa. His body was flayed, and his skin, stuffed with straw, was fastened to one of the city gates, which long bore the name of the gate of Mâni. From that time the Manichæans suffered cruel persecutions.

The tragic end of its founder did not stop the progress of the new religion. From that moment it spread rapidly towards the West, and invaded the Roman Empire. Eusebius in his Chronicle dates the first appearance of

Mâni from the fourth year of Probus (279-80). He must allude to the first spread of Manichæism to the west of Persia.[1]

Once on Roman ground, Manichæism assumed new characteristics, with an affinity to Christianity, which then was strong in Syria and even the adjacent provinces. Eusebius says the Manichæans gave out that their prophet was the Paraclete promised in the Gospel, and associated with him a company of twelve apostles. But these details are only of secondary importance. Manichæism was in no sense a Christian heresy, an irregular offshoot from the Gospel; it was, in fact, a new religion. And it was not a national religion; it rose counter to the official worship of Persia, Zoroastrianism or Mazdeism, before subverting the Buddhists of India, and the Christians of the Roman Empire. It was a religion with pretensions to universality. And its teaching was as follows:—[2]

There are two essential principles, essentially opposed to each other, light and darkness. They are conceived of as two kingdoms. In the first kingdom reigns the Supreme God, from whom radiate ten or twelve virtues, Love, Faith, Wisdom, Goodness, etc. This kingdom has a heaven and an earth, both filled with light. Below is the domain of darkness, without God or heaven, but with an earth. There Satan dwells with his demons, who form his court, as the bright æons form that of the God of Light.

On one side these kingdoms touch, and there they meet in perpetual battle. Once Satan succeeded in invading the kingdom of light. From God and the Spirit on His right hand (syzygie) issued a new being, primitive man, and God despatched him against Satan. For a moment Satan triumphed. Then God came to the

[1] In his *Ecclesiastical History*, vii. 31, Eusebius bears witness that Manichæism, of Persian origin, was then already very prevalent. He wrote in the first years of the 4th century.

[2] I give here only the principal points. The Manichæan mythology is as complicated by adventures as was that of the early Babylonians, with which it had features in common.

rescue, with His angels, and repaired the defeat of primitive man. Satan was driven off. But he had had primitive man for some time in his hands, and had robbed him of some particles of light. Hence, a mixture of light and dark elements, which propagated its kind. Primitive man arrests the progress of evil, but what is done, is done.

With the complex elements already existing, God formed the actual universe, a mixture of good and evil. It includes a series of heavens, governed by angels (or æons) of light. The sun and the moon are brighter than the rest. In the sun dwells primitive man; in the moon, his syzygie, the mother of light. Though the world is made by God, working, it is true, with imperfect elements, *man* is the creation of Satan and his acolytes. Satan placed in Adam, the first of the race, all the elements of light that he had stolen. Eve is formed like Adam, but with much fewer particles of light; she is the temptress, the instrument of perdition. Cain and Abel are the fruits of her intercourse with Satan himself; Seth was the real son of the first human couple. He soon became the object of his mother's hatred; her evil intentions, however, came to nothing. Eve, Cain, and Abel fall into the power of hell; but Adam and Seth, on the contrary, are translated, after their death, into the kingdom of light.

Thus humanity is tormented by the struggles of these two elements, present in each sex, though unequally. The captive light[1] tends to escape. The demons try to keep it back by the passions, by error, and by false religions, notably that of Moses and the prophets; while the spirits of light aid it to escape. To effect this, knowledge of the truth is of the utmost importance, and therefore messengers were sent from God—Noah, Abraham, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus. By Jesus, however, must be understood a Jesus incapable of suffering (*Jesus impatibilis*), a celestial æon, who, at the beginning, came to succour Adam in his struggle against Eve and Satan; not the historical Jesus, who was only a false Messiah of the Jews, inspired by the

[1] This is what the Manichæans of the West called *Jesus patibilis*.

devil. Of these divine ambassadors, Mâni was the last and best.

As the elements of light disengage themselves from men, they return, by way of the zodiac and the moon, to the sun. Thence, after a final purification, they ascend to the kingdom of light itself. The bodies, and also the souls of the non-elect, remain in the kingdom of darkness. When all the light has returned to its source, the world will come to an end.

From this anthropology it follows that men are good or bad by nature, in proportion to the light or dark elements they contain. The only moral outcome of this is, logically, a rigorous asceticism. The chief end of life is to hinder the decay of the elements of light in oneself, to facilitate their disentanglement, and to work for the annihilation, or attenuation, of the others. War is declared with the world of sense. The disciple of Mâni is marked with three seals, on the mouth, on the hand, and on the breast. The first forbids impure words, animal food, and the use of wine. Vegetables, the Manichæans were allowed to eat, but not to *kill*, which means that someone else had to gather the fruits and herbs which were to serve for their meals. The seal on the hand forbids contact with anything impure; and that on the breast, all sex relations, even marriage. They had many fast days, one day in every four, and Sunday always. They were to pray four times a day, turning towards the sun, the moon, or the pole-star.

Such asceticism is evidently quite unattainable by ordinary mortals; it was only practised, therefore, by a few, by the *Elect*, who were, indeed, the only true Manichæans. The common people, the hearers, might live like everyone else. The *Elect* helped on their salvation; and they saw to the comfort of the *Elect*. In the Manichæan society, the elect take the place of monks, confessors, and saints. Above them, however, there was a hierarchy of priests and seventy-two bishops, and above all, twelve doctors. One of these was their head, a sort of Manichæan pope. He was supposed to live, and often did live, in Babylon.

The worship was very simple; it consisted only of prayers and chants. A festival in March, the Feast of the Bêma, commemorated the death of Mâni. A richly adorned throne was set up on five steps, symbolizing the five degrees of the hierarchy: hearers, Elect, priests, bishops, and doctors. No one sat on it; but all prostrated themselves before it.

Many different elements certainly went to make up this combination of doctrines and practices, and their association was not always original. It was not for nothing that Mâni and his father lived so long with the Mugtasila. The sacred book of their descendants,[1] the Mandaïtes of our day, shows that in the doctrine of these baptizers there was a certain blending of old Babylonian legends with the teachings of the Bible. A strange form of Christianity, recalling that of the serpent-worshipping sects, and Elkasaism especially,[2] must have arisen in the 2nd century, upon the ruins of the old Chaldean civilization. The Jews were very numerous in these countries. Mâni, like the Mandaïtes, teaches dualism, radical, essential, and eternal.[3] Many traits in his celestial beings recall the Babylonian gods and heroes, Ea, Mardouk, Gilgamès, etc. The dominant idea of light may come from the Iranian religion. The Bible supplied many names. It differs from the Gnostic sects, which always give a prominent position to Jesus, in that Mâni has no concern with the Gospel. He himself is the only teacher and revealer.

He left behind him various writings, afterwards suppressed by the authorities, Christian, Mazdean, or Mussulman. The *Fihrist* enumerates seven of the more

[1] *The Treasure* (Ginzâ) or *Great Book* (Sidrâ rabbâ) or *Book of Adam* (ed. Petermann, Berlin, 1867). For the Mandaïtes, see the article by Kessler, in Hauck's *Encyclopædia*.

[2] Mâni does not seem to have been well acquainted with orthodox Christianity. Observe the prominence which he assigns to the patriarch Seth. This is also characteristic of Gnostics of the ophitic type.

[3] In the Persian religion, Ahriman is only, like our Satan, a fallen creature. Ormuzd is the only true God.

important: the Secrets, the Giants, the Precepts for hearers, the Schâpourakân, the Life-giver, the Pragmateia, the Gospel. The last of these was written in Persian (pehlvi), the others in Aramaic. Some of them are quoted by Christian controversialists, especially by the author of the Acts of Archelaus, and by St Augustine. Augustine devoted one of his books to the refutation of the *Epistola Fundamenti*, which is identical with the "Precepts for Hearers." The "Gospel" had nothing in common with the Christian books of that name, except its title. Besides these treatises, a great number of letters, written either by Mâni himself, or by his first successors, were collected.[1]

We need not follow the progress of the new sect, either towards the East, where, in spite of persecution, it continued to spread, until the time of the Mongol invasion; nor to the West, where, though proscribed both by State and Church, it gave trouble to both for ten centuries by its ever renewed vitality. The point to notice now, is the extraordinary welcome this religion, imported, though it was, from the hereditary foe of Rome, received on the soil of the empire. Thirty years after the death of Mâni, Eusebius was much distressed at its success. About the same time (296), the Emperor Diocletian decreed the severest penalties against the Manichæans,[2] the stake for the leaders, death for all the rest (except the *honestiores*, who were to be sent to the mines of Phænus or Proconnesus); confiscation for all. All their books were to be burnt.

Thus persecuted, the Manichæan sect had to conceal its existence, and to behave as a secret society. When Christianity became the dominant religion of the empire, the Manichæans feigned Christianity, and even orthodoxy, adopting the language and practices of the Church, and combining them, as best they could, with their own observances.

[1] Fabricius, *Bibl. gr.*, vol. vii. (2), p. 311, has collected all the known fragments of these letters.

[2] *Cod. Gregor.* iv. 4. This edict was addressed to Julian, the proconsul of Africa, and dated from Alexandria, where Diocletian only stayed in 296 and 304. The last date is, I think, less probable than the other.

The rapidity with which Manichæism overran the Western lands, seems to indicate that it absorbed the surviving 2nd century Gnostic heresies. In its dualism, its morality, and perhaps even by an actual historic link, it had some affinity with the old Syrian gnostic sects, and stepped naturally into their place. But it did not absorb them so completely, but that, in Egypt at the end of the 4th century, there still remained little groups, bred up on ophite doctrines, and poring over the terrible rigmaroles of which the *Pistis Sophia* is an example. In spite of all, these men were Christians. Jesus still was to them Master and Saviour; they were not easily to be persuaded to regard Him as an emissary of the devil. The Bardesanites and the Marcionites, more in earnest, and not so far removed from orthodoxy, stood firm; they held their ground in Syria and Mesopotamia for a long time. In the 4th century there were still many Bardesanites at Edessa; and in the following century, Theodoret, the Bishop of Cyrrhus, found more than ten thousand Marcionites to convert in his diocese alone. The last Gnostics were drawn into the orthodox Church rather than to the religion of Mâni.

4. *Judaism.*

As to the Jews,[1] their opposition to Christianity, shown from the very first, became more and more inveterate. They recovered at last from the catastrophes that overwhelmed them incessantly between the reigns of Nero and Hadrian. But the massacres at the end of Trajan's reign, which were the penalty they paid for their revolts in Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia, no doubt diminished the importance of their communities in these countries. In Judæa the same results followed the war of Vespasian, and more specially the defeat of Bar-Kocheba (135). The Jews had to leave the country; they were no longer allowed to approach the ruins of Jerusalem, or the colony of Ælia, which was rising on the site of the Holy City.

[1] On this point, see the book already quoted by Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 4th ed., vol. i., p. 113-138 and 642-704.

Other colonies were founded in Judæa and Samaria, Neapolis, Emmaus (later Nicopolis), Diospolis, Eleutheropolis. The land of Judah and Ephraim now passed finally from the sons of Jacob to the children of Edom.[1]

The "remnant of Israel" concentrated itself west of Judæa, at Jamnia (Jabné), a place on the Philistine coast, south of Joppa. Johanan-ben-Sakkaï, and Gamaliel the younger, are mentioned as their leaders. Thanks to the toleration of the governors, they achieved some measure of self-organization. The Sadducean aristocracy had perished in the insurrection; a feeble remnant took refuge at a distance, chiefly in Mesopotamia, where there still existed Jewish or Judaizing princes. The Temple was destroyed; and the few priests and Levites who remained, soon died out. Only the Pharisees and the Scribes, or Doctors of the Law, remained. The government devolved on them, and being no longer free to concern itself with politics, became purely religious. The Sanhedrim (*συνέδριον*), formerly the principal organ of political life, could not be reconstituted. The old name, however, was sometimes given to a council, of which the president, in the long run, acquired considerable importance, and was distinguished, more or less officially, by the title of patriarch. As in all the other Jewish colonies, the leaders had charge of the civil jurisdiction. And they occasionally usurped the criminal jurisdiction also. The Jews in all lands supported this organization by their offerings, and the persons called *apostles* sent to collect them, held at the same time a sort of visit of inspection.

The religious life now became very narrow. The day of liberal Jews, who coquetted with Hellenism and with the government, was past and gone for good. There is no longer any desire to stand well with other nations, nor to make proselytes. That field is left to the "Nazarenes." The Jews retired within themselves, absorbed in the contemplation of the Law; their joy being to observe its minutest directions. No doubt there are points in which

[1] At this time the name of Edom was used by the Jews, by a play on the words, to designate Rome and the Romans.

it can no longer be observed, but who knows that the old worship will not some day be re-established, and the Temple rise again from its ruins?[1] Meantime, rules enough still remained observable, to give a definite object to their fidelity and daily food to their religious life.

The Law was everything to them. The canonists expressed the enthusiasm it inspired in commentaries, and the Scribes continued their work in exile. At Lydda (Diospolis), not far from Jamnia, a Rabbinical School of great importance grew up. About the middle of the 2nd century the School of Tiberias took its place.

The National Council, with its president, was transferred to Tiberias, and there the Jewish Patriachs lived during the 3rd and 4th centuries. At that time, flourishing Jewish colonies again filled Galilee. We hear of those of Capernaum, Sepphoris, Diocæsarea, Tiberias, and Nazareth; the Land of the Gospel was covered with synagogues, the ruins of which still remain.[2] The first collection of Commentaries on the Law was made there. The Mishna, the most ancient, dates from the end of the 2nd century. It contains at least two thousand maxims, or solutions of knotty points, by noted Rabbis, from Johan-ben-Sakkai down to Judas the Saint, a contemporary of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. Judas is regarded as the author of the Mishna.[3] This treasury of legal wisdom soon acquired an authoritative position, and forming, like the Law itself, a basis for further discussion, gave rise, in its turn, to two more collections of commentaries. One of these, compiled in Galilee, far on in the 4th century, is called the Talmud of Jerusalem; the other dates from the next century and

[1] The apocalyptic books of Baruch and Esdras, written during the generation which followed the great catastrophe, promised that Israel should be restored very shortly. On these books see Schürer, *op. cit.*, vol. iii., p. 223 *et seq.*

[2] See the curious stories related by St Epiphanius, *Haer.* 30.

[3] A rather later collection, the *Tosephta*, has not attained the canonical authority the Mishna enjoys amongst Jews.

from the Jewish schools in Persia, and is known as the Talmud of Babylon.[1]

Outside the Palestinian centre, the Dispersion, far away from the religious authorities who replaced the abolished priesthood, spread continually, without proselytism, merely by the natural increase of the race. This growth was at one time jeopardized by Hadrian's edict forbidding circumcision. It was impossible for the Jews to submit to such a prohibition. Their indignation broke out in fresh revolts, so that Antoninus revoked the prohibition, and simply forbade circumcision to any but the children of Jews, a regulation enforced also by Severus.

The isolation of the Jews was thus encouraged by government, and, at the same time, it continued to show them toleration, so that they spread more and more, occupying themselves in mean employments and petty trade. In the 4th century, there were Jews everywhere. And the bishops were disturbed by the close intercourse between them and the Christians, who were at times inclined to take part in their feasts, and to adopt their customs.[2]

The men of letters continued the controversies of Aristo and St Justin. The same vexed questions perpetually recurred. The Christian aim being to prove the Gospel by the Old Testament, they were much annoyed when the Jews would not accept their allegorical interpretations, and even questioned their quotations.

Once there had been Greek-speaking Jews who were able to take part in such controversies, and the Septuagint version had been made for their use. In the 2nd century, being discredited by the use Christians made of it, it was discarded in favour of more literal translations. The translation of Theodotion was a revision of the Septuagint, according to the Hebrew version then received in Palestine; that of Aquila was an entirely new version, of excessive

[1] Each of these Talmuds consists of two parts, the *Mishna*, common to both, which forms the text; and the *Gemara* or commentary, which is different in each Talmud.

[2] The Council of Elvira, about 300, forbade Christians to eat with Jews, or to have their harvests blessed by them (c. 49, 50).

and repelling minuteness. Controversialists could thus set one version against another. In the end, however, the Hellenic element was entirely eliminated; and as the Jews had abandoned the Septuagint, so they abandoned Aquila and Theodotion, and in their religious services used the Hebrew text exclusively.

Paganism old or new, exotic or national, mystic philosophies, new-fangled religions, and old-fashioned Judaism—all these forces, at the end of the 3rd century, opposed Christianity. Another power, apparently more formidable though only of intermittent hostility, was that of the Roman State. It was finally to be utterly vanquished, and become the servant of the victorious Gospel. But this change was not accomplished without a terrible struggle, which must now be considered.

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